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NEW MASSE

JANUARY 25, 1938 FIFTEEN CENTS A

Why Rumania Went Fascist

By F. Elwyn Jones

The Campus Debates War and Pe

By Joseph P. Lash

They Call It Service *by* **Lucy Randolph**

Miami's Anti-Semitic Jews *by* **Robert Gessner**

Wanted: Great Songs *by* **Robert Forsythe**

Goya's Spain Invaded *by* **Jay Peterson**

"Red Star over China" *reviewed by* **General Yakhontoff**

Drawings and Cartoons by William Gropper, Gardner Rea, John Mackey, and oth-

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

IC comments on the a theater section in. "It is heartening NEW MASSES, which led specific cultural st, shows itself pre- fill the gap left by *lew Theatre,*" writes a, playwright and au- , a forthcoming Labor n, and winner of sev- r his one-act plays. action, if undertaken ture, will be extremely resurgence of interest nes and forms in the ently become noticeable lindest observers on the istence of an audience supplement is proved dinary success of such ions as the *Pins and* e and the agit-prop *Cradle Will Rock*—both been forced by popular bandon occasional per- nightly showings on a Broadway basis."

dman, who staged *Pins* writes: "Despite the of any institution like Union and its many orces of the left theater emselves heard. Blitz- n lights, so is Odets; *dles* can't be gotten into oney, and there's more .. News, comment, and this theater of *ours* in a ss supplement would make l material charged with a The reader interest would . I'd gladly contribute to o with material, advice, t would be deemed use- 'd *always* be—like a thou- I'm sure—your constant

ai Gorelik feels that the n of a monthly theater arts vould be very valuable for c and theater people and the too."

Alice Ware, herself a writer plays, thinks that "there is need for some spur to left dertakings and to a Marx- retation of current theater ons. . . . Box office has much ith the folding up of several ventures, but I believe the t a good monthly interest and gement from you, done by in- t writers and critics, would do quicken the creative spirit." readers also concur in voic- faction with the project. offman feels that there is a need for such a magazine and ore heartily endorses the plan. n Seibel thinks "the idea of g a theater supplement to the MASSES sounds swell—not only e of the added interest for old MASSES readers, but because it lso be a stimulant to those who he magazine sporadically or ll. Together with the literary ment, the NEW MASSES would e a swell and complete digest. ll means, a theater supplement." n Ward, who is directing . . . *of a nation* . . ., "welcomes Toni Michael, Irving Shapiro, Cy Enfield, Sol Kashins, and others.

What's What

WE are happy to announce that Orson Welles, the young genius of the Mercury Theatre, whose staging and direction of *Julius Caesar* and *The Shoemaker's Holiday* have made them the outstanding Broadway productions of the season, will open the NEW MASSES concert on February 6. As the program on page 28 shows, most of the conductors will personally conduct their own works. The others will be on hand, however. Carlos Chavez, Hanns Eisler, and Kurt Weill have all promised to attend. And for those swing enthusiasts who were not able to get into Carnegie Hall for the recent Benny Goodman concert, Count Basie, who participated in that concert, and his fifteen-piece band will do a "jam" session. Count Basie will swing "Ya Gotta, Ya Gotta" from *I've Got the Tune,* as well as a number of his own compositions.

Bruce Minton, labor editor of the NEW MASSES, has been out in the steel, rubber, and automobile areas. His articles on the labor situation in these parts of the country will begin in an early issue.

Modern Age Books, incidentally, will dramatize a section of *Men Who Lead Labor,* on which Minton and John Stuart collaborated, on its January 29 program, which goes over Station WABC of the Columbia network at 9:30 p.m. The January 22 program will include a dramatization of *The Labor Spy Racket,* by Leo Huberman, sections of which first appeared in our pages.

From Professor Philip O. Keeney comes a correction of "one statement of fact in William F. Dunne's splendid article on my dismissal from Montana State University [issue of January 11], *viz.,* I was senior assistant in the order department of the University of Michigan library and *not* assistant librarian.

"The administration at Montana has claimed that I got my appointment at Montana by stating in my application for the post that I was the Michigan assistant librarian. My correspondence with the late President Clapp of M.S.U. shows that I gave my correct Michigan status which appeared in the daily Missoulian the morning after I accepted the post. Mr. Dunne heard President Simmon's attorney at the hearing try to catch me on the same question and my correct answer will appear in the court record."

Eugene Morley's lithograph, *Potthole,* which is reproduced on page 20 of this issue, won first honorable mention in a competition at the Philadelphia Art Alliance. It is included in the New York Municipal Art Galleries exhibition, which closes January 23.

Who's Who

ELWYN JONES, a British writer and barrister, organized the legal defense of the Austrian Social-Democrats. He is the author of *Hitler's Drive to the East.* . . . Joseph P. Lash is the national secretary of the American Student Union. . . . Robert Gessner, author of *Some of My Best Friends Are Jews,* is an instructor at New York University, where he is giving a special course in the history of cinema writing. . . . R. K. Lamb is assistant professor of economics at Williams College. . . . General Victor Yakhontoff is the author of *The Chinese Soviets.* . . . Alson J. Smith, whose letter appears in Readers' Forum, is pastor of the Grace Methodist Episcopalian Church in Waterbury, Conn. A member of the Religion and Labor Foundation, he has previously written for the *Christian Century, Zion's Herald,* and *Economic Justice.* . . . Lucy Randolph informs us that her article is an account of an actual experience. She has worked intermittently with this "service company" for several months in the cities in the South. "There are several such companies, some perhaps with other methods. Details of procedure vary, of course, with different crews and different situations, but the basic routine is the same."

Flashbacks

"ANOTHER one of the old guard gone home!" wrote Engels to Marx when Chartist leader Ernest Jones died, on his fiftieth birthday, January 26, 1869. "The news naturally caused a deep shock to us all," Marx replied, "for he was one of our few old friends." Jones, revolutionary poet, novelist, and journalist was held by Marx and Engels to be the only prominent British politician who thoroughly understood the Socialist movement. . . . Another British poet and revolutionary is remembered this week. George Gordon Lord Byron, who died while heading an international brigade fighting for the freedom of Greece, was born January 22, 1788. . . . As the personnel of the Supreme Court shifts these days, attention turns easily to an anniversary which certain of the doddering justices may regard with wistful affection. On January 27, 1908 the Court ruled that a law was unconstitutional which forbade employers to discharge workers for belonging to a union. Such a measure, the judges soberly held, deprived the employers of liberty without due process of law (*Adair vs. U.S.* 161). . . . A new type of army protecting a new type of ruling class came into existence January 28, 1918. On that day the government of Soviet Russia signed a decree for the establishment of the Red Army.

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NEW MASSES
JANUARY 25, 1938

Why Rumania Went Fascist

By F. Elwyn Jones

THE establishment of a fascist state in Rumania under the direction of King Carol and Octavian Goga has not in the least surprised those who have watched carefully the political development of Rumania in the last four years.

Goga in fact is merely putting the finishing touches to a pro-fascist policy which has been pursued relentlessly since December 1933, when martial law was established in Rumania. Martial law has been in force ever since and has been used savagely against anti-fascists. Thus in 1936, a girl of thirteen from Kishinev, in Bessarabia, was actually sentenced to ten years' imprisonment for distributing anti-fascist leaflets. She and over six hundred other political prisoners, including the eminent Professor Constantinescu, professor of history at the University of Bucharest, are now rotting in the Rumanian jails—most of them in the military prison of Vici Gilava, where the prisoners' hands are chained to their knees for weeks. Some have been sent to the Cernoti prison, in which prisoners are tortured by being hung by the feet in mid-air until they lose consciousness.

The so-called "liberal" regime of Tatarescu, which has now been superseded, played a role similar to that of von Papen in Germany. It cleared the path for fascism. It made a mockery of parliament by ruling by direct decree; it crushed liberties by martial law and censorship of the press; it gave a free hand to fascist terrorists who were paid, armed, and directed from Berlin; and it accepted the services of fascists like Goga to bring about the downfall of Titulescu.

Three days before Carol got rid of Titulescu, Goga returned from Berlin to Bucharest. Immediately upon his return he was received at the royal palace. Goga had had a number of confidential talks with Hitler, Hess, Goering, Goebbels, von Neurath, von Ribbentrop, Rosenberg, and other Nazi chiefs. The substance of these talks was put before Carol, and Goga urged that Rumania should negotiate a close alliance with Nazi Germany.

Goga had brought back with him from Berlin a copy of a dossier on Titulescu. This had been compiled by the Gestapo, on the instructions of Herr Himmler, and contained reports by German secret agents on Titulescu's activities and movements abroad. It included a statement by the German secret police alleging not only that Titulescu had neglected Rumania's interests, but that, while abroad, he had made statements tending to discredit the political aims of Carol. After reading the document, the king took steps, with Tatarescu's aid, to get Titulescu out of the way. (At about the same time Titulescu began to feel ill and soon eight doctors were working at St. Moritz to save him from death by poison. The general opinion in Bucharest is that he was poisoned by an Iron Guard legionnaire who smuggled himself as a cook into Titulescu's hotel in Efori, by the Black Sea, when he was on holiday.)

J. Bartlett

King Carol is a Hohenzollern. His Romanov connections in some measure explain his violent enmity toward the Soviet Union, and render him susceptible to fascist pressure. The Rumanian officers' corps, an offspring of the feudal boyar caste of big landowners, is also pro-fascist. There is hardly one among the adventurers and generals, corrupt civil servants and mendacious politicians who surround the king, who cannot be bought.

The position of Mme. Lupescu is interesting. Though Jewish by birth, the king's mistress is said in Bucharest to be a pronounced anti-Semite, and this may explain why Goga finds no difficulty in coöperating with her. Mme. Lupescu is by now one of the richest women in Rumania, and her power is undiminished. The Lupescu clique holds in its hands the important administrative posts, and its influence is very powerful.

The program Goga has laid down during the first few days of his administration makes it clear that his political ideas are wholly Nazi.

The triumph of Nazi ideas in this Black Sea country is due partly to incessant propaganda to this end directed from Berlin. The Nazi Ministry of Propaganda controls eighty Rumanian newspapers, and over sixty million lei were spent on Nazi propaganda in Rumania during 1936. Every town in Rumania now has its anti-Semitic newspaper which bears a swastika on the front page.

In addition to this, the Nazis have subsidized the terrorist Iron Guard legionnaires, who wear a swastika on their green shirts, and whose officers have been trained for their murderous work by the men who arranged the killing of Dollfuss and the "bloody purge" of June 30, 1934. The Nazis have also assisted Goga's National Christian Party. In 1935, for instance, when Goga and Cuza amalgamated their anti-Semitic forces, the amalgamation was closely helped by t

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Bucharest correspondent of the *Völkischer Beobachter,* Herr Weber, who was expelled from Rumania on this account.

Anti-Semitism in Rumania, however, was not created by the Nazis. What the Nazi propagandists did was to exploit the social conflicts already existing in the country. Most of the land belongs to an aristocracy of Greek origin. The vast estates are tilled by peasants who are so poor that in Bessarabia they use over and over again the same salt water in which they have boiled their vegetables, in order to save buying more salt. Feudalism retains its grip on the Rumanian countryside. The class bitterness which results from absentee landlords and landless laborers has been increased by the fact that a small fraction of the big estates were parceled out among the peasantry after the war. The vast majority, who did not share the spoils, resent their landlessness all the more. (It is interesting to note that this situation repeated itself almost exactly in Spain in 1936.)

In order to prevent an open clash between landlord and laborer, anti-Semitism has been deliberately stimulated by the owners of property. Most of the Rumanian peasants, being illiterate, are easy dupes for all forms of charlatanry. In 1936, for instance, a priest who was selling "seats in heaven" was arrested by the police in Kishinev, Bessarabia (on the borders of the Soviet Union). He had a "map of heaven" on his lectern, with allotments portioned out, and numbers on them. Trusting peasants, mostly women, used to come to his house and choose a position on the map. The places "near God" cost double the normal price. Those near the Archangel Gabriel were a little cheaper. Ordinary places cost the equivalent of ten dollars. Many peasants sold their last cow to obtain a place "on the right hand of God."

Credulity such as this makes Jew-baiting a simple matter, since anti-Semitism offers to the discontent of the peasants an easy victim.

The depressed condition of the Rumanian middle class renders it as susceptible to anti-Semitism as the peasantry. This middle class is irresistibly attracted by Goga's argument that the Jews have usurped too great a place in the social and economic life of the country. Now there are 850,000 Jews in Rumania, 5 percent of the total population, and although the charge that they have seized the best posts is demonstrably absurd, it is true that they have a much stronger hold over commerce and industry than they have over agriculture. That so much money goes through Jewish hands is chiefly due to those laws, but recently repealed, which prohibited them from entering the professions and from owning and cultivating the land. The Jews have done the only work left open to them.

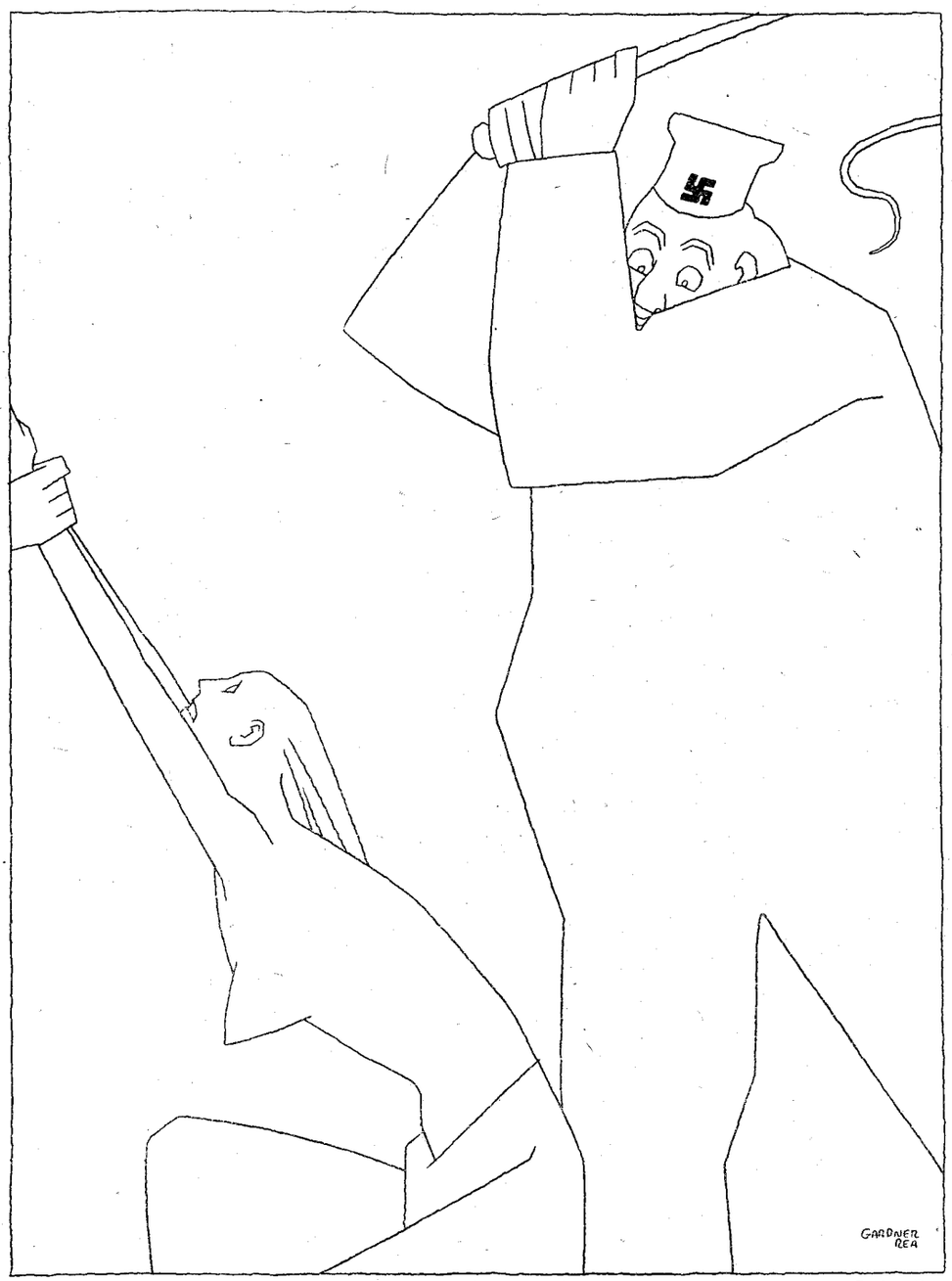
There have been Jews in Rumania since early Christian times, but a growing stream of them entered during the eighteenth century, particularly after the partitions of Poland, and many followed them during and after the World War. Some of the eastern Jews retain their ancient Semitic customs and speech, but many others, notably those who came from Spain in 1494, have been completely assimilated and have played a great part in the country's economic growth.

It is upon these 850,000 people that the fascist Goga is now preparing a most brutal attack. A systematic persecution has already begun (in spite of the bland assurances of Carol). The Goga government proposes that all Jews naturalized since 1922 lose their rights of citizenship, that they be driven from trade in small villages and great towns alike, that none of them own land, and that none sell articles of the state monopoly—spirits, tobacco, and matches. The way is open for the Rumanian terrorists to insult and beat up the Jewish people.

An attack is also made on Jewish professional men. It is proposed to enforce a decree that no Jews remain editorial employees in Rumania and that Rumanian newspapers may employ only "Aryan" Rumanians, while the minority papers must employ only "Aryan" members of their nationality.

If the Goga government is allowed to carry through the drastic program it threatens, Europe will be faced by a refugee problem which will greatly surpass the recent emigration from Nazi Germany. And the lot of the emigré in Europe today is daily becoming more intolerable. Already Poland, Bulgaria, and Austria have made special arrangements to keep the Rumanian refugees out of their territories, while other countries are also certain to close their doors.

All the Goga proposals are, of course, flagrant violations of the Minorities Treaty concluded between the United States, the British empire, France, Italy, Japan, and Rumania, on December 9, 1919, which is guar-



Strength Through Joy

Gardner Rea

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anteed by the League of Nations. Article 8 of the treaty provides complete equality of civil and political rights for all Rumanian citizens, whatever their race, language, or religion. It further explicitly provides that no Rumanian national shall be under any disability because of his religion or race as regards the enjoyment of civil and political rights, and notably as regards admission to government service and the exercise of the various professions and industries.

Article 7 ordered the automatic naturalization of all "Jews inhabiting any Rumanian territory who do not possess another nationality." Rumania then agreed that, in the event of violation of any of these clauses, any member of the League Council might give notice of the wrong and that the Council should then take appropriate action. If this campaign against the Jews goes forward, it is therefore imperative that the League Council should act firmly at its session this month, for it is undoubtedly the failure of the League to act firmly in the past when similar violations of treaties have been committed, which has encouraged the Rumanian fascists to break their pledge at this juncture.

It is inevitable that Goga's oppressive policy should be accompanied by measures to stifle the voice of protest. Already three newspapers—*Adeverul, Dimineata,* and *Lupta*—have been suppressed because of their "subversive interventions," and Goga announces: "We shall proceed similarly with other publications which are considered dangerous." These three papers were of a democratic character. *Dimineata* made itself especially hated by exposing the corruption of Nazi agents in Rumania. It revealed that the fascists had established a terror center in the Blue House, their Bucharest headquarters, that they patrolled the streets, seized Jewish-looking passers-by, and carried them off to be tortured in the Blue House. The fascists, knowing no argument but force, kidnaped Dr. Blumenfield, the editor of *Dimineata,* and beat him up so badly that he nearly died of his injuries. And this, in the days of a "liberal" administration.

The social measures proposed by Goga reveal the bankruptcy of his politics. There are the usual demagogic attacks on trusts. Similar attacks, it may be noted, were made by Hitler before he seized power, even though he was at that very time in the pay of the trusts. Third-class fares have been reduced—an obvious bid for popularity with the masses. Finally, improvement of the facilities for the making of plum brandy.

Rumanian democrats may derive some consolation from the fact that an even worse alternative to Goga faced Rumania after the recent elections—namely, an Iron Guard government. The Iron Guard, now calling itself the "All for the Fatherland Party," started its existence after the war as a purely terrorist and obscure secret society called "Archangel Michael." Its political aims are fascist. Its method—assassination. Its leader, Corneliu Zealea Codreanu, began his career in 1923 by the murder of the police prefect of Jassy for prohibiting an anti-Semitic student demonstration. Although he is a fanatical Rumanian nationalist, Codreanu is not a Rumanian at all, but a Ukrainian, his real name being Zelinski.

It remains to be seen what attitude the Iron Guard will take toward Goga's fascism. Goga may attempt to bring some of Codreanu's men into his government, and he may take the wind out of Codreanu's sails by pursuing an even more violent anti-Semitic policy himself.

What of the democratic opposition? Potentially, this is strong, but its counsels are divided, and at the election Dr. Maniu, the peasant leader, instead of giving a bold lead to the democratic forces in the country actually made a pact with the Iron Guard. The result was disastrous defeat at the polls. But democratic resistance in the country to fascist plans will be powerful, and though it may not be strong enough to stop anti-Semitism, it may be able to prevent Goga and King Carol from making fundamental changes in foreign policy.

Goga's party has openly declared its opposition to the League of Nations and its sympathy with Berlin, and Goga's past makes it clear that all his inclinations are toward the Rome-Berlin axis. That is why his accession to power has created such delight in the Rome and Berlin chancelleries.

As yet, however, no change in foreign policy has been announced, and for a very simple reason. Without the financial aid of France and the assistance of Czechoslovakian arms factories, Rumania is almost helpless. It is reported that France is already bringing pressure to bear by withholding the credits recently promised by Minister Delbos on the occasion of his Bucharest visit. This may have a chastening effect. The Bratianu dynasty, which controls the great Resitza armament factory and the Banca Romanescu, is Francophile, and has all along resisted economic penetration by Nazi Germany. Indeed, the majority of Rumanian capitalists are opposed to German domination of Rumania's economic life—a fate which has befallen the other Balkan countries. Business circles in Bucharest are dissatisfied with the working of the exchange clearing-agreements with Germany and complain bitterly that, whereas Germany has sent enough aspirin to cure five hundred years of headaches, not a penny of foreign currency has come into Rumania for her eighteen million Reichmarks' credit to Germany, while, on the other hand, Germany has disposed of some of the Rumanian imports by selling them at low prices for gold, thus undercutting the Rumanian traders.

Never was France given such an opportunity of establishing her influence in Bucharest as in the last twelve months. She must pay dearly now for the weakness of her foreign policy and for having become entangled in England's diplomatic apron-strings.

Mischa Richter

"We are gathered here to protest the unconstitutionality of the anti-lynching bill."

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The Campus Debates War and Peace

By Joseph P. Lash

THE Vassar convention of the American Student Union is a matter of history, but the actions it took to make America a force for peace are now major issues on every campus. The attention paid by press and public to the Vassar convention indicated how largely the issues that agitated us were of concern to the whole nation. Moreover, the student peace movement has been the most articulate section of the peace movement as a whole, and in that student peace movement the A.S.U. has been the dynamo. The change in policy of the A.S.U. reconfirmed its leadership of the student peace movement, a leadership originally established by its sponsorship of the student peace strike and its work for the establishment of the United Student Peace Committee.

How much of a body blow the A.S.U. decisions were to "left" isolationism and "right" isolationism is now evident from the vicious attack upon the A.S.U. by the sectarians and by those who feel the best peace policy is one of inaction. Everything is being discussed but the issues. It is inconceivable to the Socialists, the pacifists, and the Trotskyites that when the issues are intelligently presented, individuals who want peace will choose the policy of an economic quarantine of the aggressor. Today they are comforting themselves with assertions that the only reason the A.S.U. adopted its new peace policy was that the Young Communist League had a mechanical majority. Instead of arguing the issues they take refuge in Red-baiting.

Because the issues discussed at the Vassar convention are those that concern the whole country, it is worth while recapitulating the positions as they developed at our student convention.

From the outset, the alternatives that confronted the delegates were a positive policy that would make the United States a force for peace in terms of the wars now raging in the world, or continuance of a policy embodied in the Oxford pledge, with its exclusive emphasis upon what we would do when war was declared. The former saw the fascist nations as the leading instigators of war; the latter considered the United States to be the chief war-maker. The former saw in Roosevelt's Chicago speech an utterance that strengthened the forces of peace; the latter considered it to enhance the chance of war. The former reiterated again and again that we must not despair of peace; the latter, defeatist in approach, spoke as if the only thing left for us to do was to avoid responsibility for the war.

The argument of the majority was a simple
e. We stated that the inner logic of fascism
l driven it to treaty-breaking, war provoca-
, and to war. Now the peace of the whole world was imperiled by this drive of fascism. Retreat before aggression, whether under the guise of outright betrayal of democracy as done by the English tories, or through pious talk of neutrality, entailed greater wars, more extended suffering, a wider loss of freedom. These things could be prevented only by rallying an international peace front. To accomplish this today, however, United States participation was decisive. Such an international peace front would act immediately to stop aggression by striking at the Achilles heel of fascism—its economic vulnerability. It was worth while to collect funds for childrens' homes in Spain and for ambulances in China, but these campaigns could not be considered substitutes for fighting for the right of the Spanish and Chinese governments to purchase supplies in the United States, and the denial of these rights to the aggressors. Deny Japan the oil, iron ores, and credits she now receives from the United States and England; undertake an economic quarantine of Japan, and a decisive blow will have been struck for world peace. The Soviet Union has long been anxious to collaborate in such a policy. With America equally prepared, England and France might quickly fall in line.

THE MINORITY, which opposed this policy, was composed of pacifists, Trotskyites, Lovestonites, Socialists, and a few liberals. This heterogeneous group achieved coherence only in its common opposition to any form of action for peace by the United States. It had no program for a popular struggle for peace and in fact deprecated any such program. For the actual struggle against war, it substituted pious phrases intended to disavow responsibility for any war in the future, a war which it considered inevitable and hence useless to oppose. It did not occur to them that the only genuine way of disavowing responsibility for war is activity in today's struggle for peace, not verbal pledges which the future alone can test. This shift of emphasis away from today's duty in the peace movement to paper promises of what we will do when war is already upon us is likewise the explicit assumption of the Oxford pledge. In this respect, the pledge is blood-brother to the Ludlow amendment and similar isolationist proposals.

The pseudo-left supporters of this minority position assumed that the fight against war in no way differs from the fight against capitalism, because "capitalism is the cause of war." It is only a short step from this to the assertion that only those convinced of the necessity for overthrowing capitalism should be mobilized for the struggle against war.

The assumption that one must be a revolutionist to participate in organized activity against war suffers from a pathetic fallacy, which can be illustrated with reference to other fields as well. Capitalism is not only the cause of war; it is the cause of unemployment, low wages, company unions, child labor. Does this mean that one cannot undertake to secure a Wagner Labor Relations Act, unemployment insurance, increased relief, etc.? Does this mean that we should make no demands on the government simply because we cannot "depend" exclusively on the government? Should the actions and demands of the trade unions, unemployed, etc., be strictly limited to revolutionary demonstrations? Obviously, such a position is hopelessly sectarian and stupid.

It is a matter of experience and history that the campaigns for trade-union rights, unemployment insurance, a wages and hours bill, are the means by which the masses of people learn to distinguish their friends from their enemies. Concrete experience on a limited, but intimate, scale leads people to search for the causes of their misery; this, in turn, leads them to desire the abolition of those causes. But it would be fatal if we made organized effort for increased wages wait until the bulk of workers agreed upon the abolition of capitalism. Some of them may never agree to this, and yet we want them in unions. That is how people are mobilized for progress and democracy, and precisely by the same logic to the struggle for peace.

The pseudo-left position confuses the causes of war and the way to organize a mass movement against war. Capitalism may be the cause of low wages, but we do not postpone the organization of unions until we are in a position to overthrow capitalism. Indeed, the organization of workers in unions against the evils of capitalism as it affects their day-to-day existence is the royal road to achieving a mass struggle against capitalism as a whole. To make the abolition of capitalism the precondition for popular struggle against specific capitalist evils is putting the cart before the horse.

The same thing is true of the pseudo-left argument that we must not "depend" on capitalist governments. The truth is that nobody advocated "dependence" on capitalist governments. It is one thing to "depend"; it is quite another thing to exert all possible means to force the democratic governments, such as the United States, to adopt a positive program for concerted peace action. To "depend" on capitalist governments means to surrender independent activity by the people. Nobody advocated any such thing.

It is demobilizing the struggle for peace to say that one must be a "revolutionist" to carry on the struggle for peace. Indeed, a "revolutionist" who stands aloof from the strivings for peace by the people in general—

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most of them, not revolutionists—forfeits all claim to the title.

IF ONE STUDIED the reactions of the press to Roosevelt's Chicago speech, it was abundantly clear that the reactionaries criticized the speech on the basis that any international policy of quarantining an aggressor would be anti-fascist and democratic in its consequences. The tories in England and the two hundred families in France have fought collective action against aggression precisely because it inevitably meant the overthrow of fascism, which would be such a tremendous impetus to the forces of progress. In the Italo-Ethiopian war, for example, effective economic sanctions, which were never applied, would have meant the fall of Mussolini, whom the tories consider a barrier to socialism; and the victory of a semi-colonial Negro power, with all its lessons to the Negro race everywhere.

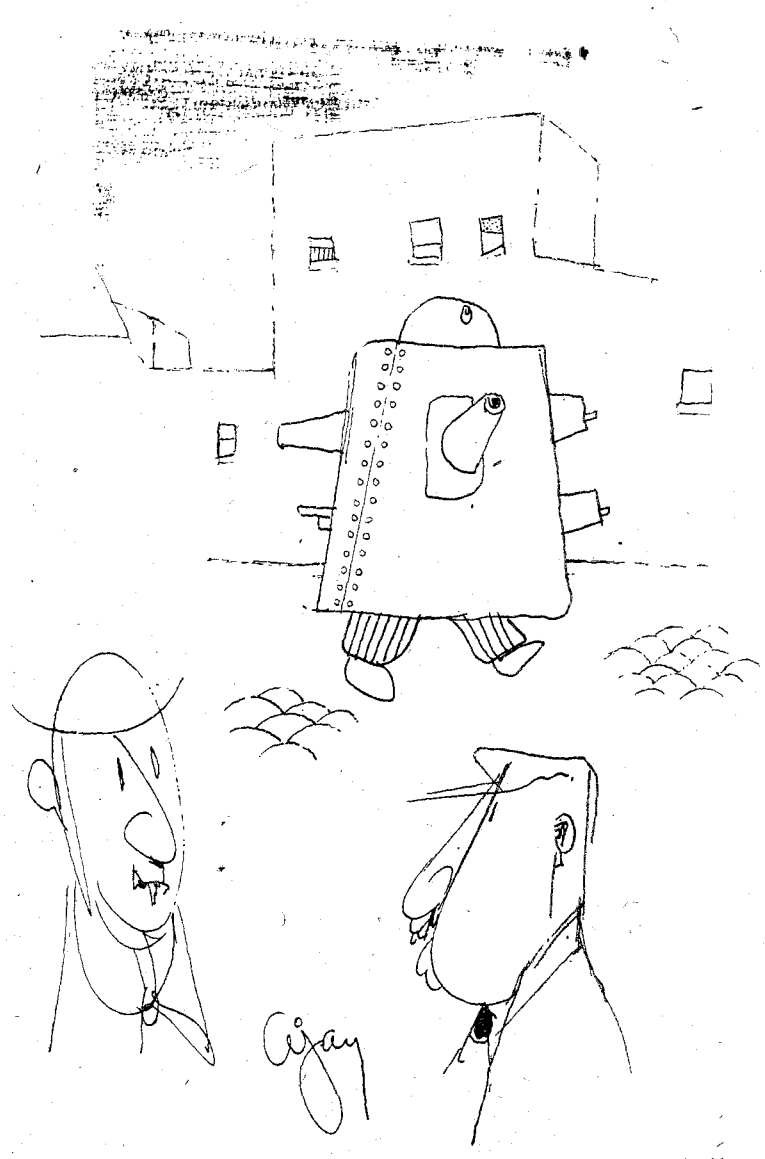
Actually it was the program of the minority that would uphold the status quo; and that of the majority, calling as it did for collective action against aggression, was anti-imperialist. The minority tried to portray our demand for action against Japan as an effort to defend the interest of Standard Oil in China, and objectively one that would uphold United States imperialist exploitation of the Chinese masses. We pointed out, however, that a victorious China would be amply able to take care of Standard Oil. What is essential today for China's victory is that she be able to get oil and other supplies from abroad. Paradoxical as it seems, the defense of the Open Door in China at the present moment is a necessary condition for the complete abolition of the Open Door. To close the Open Door today means to open that door only for Japan.

When this pseudo-leftist attack of the Trotskyites and Y.P.S.L.'s was effectively answered, they then tried to create a panic. Instead of crying fire in order to clear the hall, they cried war. "Governmental action against Japan means war!" "Are you for the war or against it?" Having no program for peace themselves, they attempted to panic the liberals and pacifists with their alarums and innuendos. Resigned to inevitable war themselves, they tried to create the impression that the demand for an economic embargo was equivalent to war.

The position of the majority was that an international economic embargo upon Japan would quickly force her to sue for peace, because of her dependence upon the United States and Great Britain for oil and other war supplies, and because of the fragility of her whole economic structure. We supported this by facts and figures. We demonstrated how such a policy would strengthen the hand of the minority in Japan which is opposed to the war, but which has been silenced by Japan's easy victories to date. The minority made no effort to disprove that economic action could be effective. Instead they cried that economic action means war. But if economic action would be effective in halting Japan, why should American imperialism indulge in the venture of a war with Japan? If war is a continuation of politics by other means, why should American imperialists resort to war, if they can achieve their end of defeating Japan by economic action? It was mandatory upon the minority that they prove that economic action could not be effective. This they would not do—because it was impossible.

The easy assumption which the minority makes that a collective economic quarantine upon Japan will lead inevitably to war is also disproved by another statement that they themselves made. In discussing the question of increased military appropriations for the United States, which the convention unanimously opposed, they, as well as the spokesman for the majority, pointed out that it was extremely difficult for Japan to carry out a military attack upon the United States, and vice versa. We agreed. But if war is such a difficult matter between Japan and the United States, then why the gratuitous assumption that economic action must lead to war?

The wishful thinking of the minority and its unrealism were nowhere so clearly expressed as in the discussion on armaments. They pointed to the sky-rocketing military budget and insinuated that this was a result of a policy of collective security. But who will say that the United States today supports a policy of collective security? The only alternative to the present drive toward armaments is a policy of collective economic action. Regardless of what the minority may believe, the ordinary person today is impressed with the aggressiveness of fascism, its treaty-breaking, its war provocation, and sees no alternative to a policy of armaments. That is why the only effective answer to the jingoists is a policy of international economic quarantine.



"That's just Thornton carrying his isolationist policy to its logical conclusion."

The inconsistency of the minority was also brought out in their position on the boycott of Japanese goods. One or two Pacifists were completely consistent. They opposed any kind of action against Japan, including the boycott. The others in the minority supported the boycott—we will not go into the motives—but stopped short when we proposed a national boycott.

We urged the boycott not only because it mobilized the people against aggression, but because in so doing, it educated the people to a need for international economic action against Japan and is the pressure weapon by which the government can be got to adopt a policy of international coöperation. American imperialism and the reactionaries in the State Department fear the boycott precisely because it mobilizes the people for collective action. They don't want such collective action because of its anti-fascist implications. These are the issues that were debated at the convention. These are the issues that many members of the minority today are afraid to debate and so are taking refuge in name-calling.

But the American Student Union has received a new strength from its new policy, and thousands of students today are coming for the first time into our organization. The decisions of the Vassar convention have strengthened the unity of the American Student Union and extended it over a wider front.

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THE CRADLE WILL ROCK

William Gropper

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NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

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Crisis in France

THE search for a new cabinet in France justifies no alarmist pronouncements on the collapse of the People's Front. Here was a first-rate cabinet crisis provoked by the right wing of the Radical Socialist Party. The conduct of this faction was itself but a reflection of pressure exerted upon it by the two hundred families and their political henchmen who are in close alliance with the British bankers.

On the surface, at least so far as the explanations issued by M. Chautemps go, the crisis appeared to be only a squabble between parties, between the Radical Socialist and Communist Parties primarily. Actually profound political issues were at stake. For several months the Chautemps government drifted farther and farther away from the program of the People's Front in financial and labor policies as well as diplomatic matters.

Every such political concession to the right met the merited opposition of the French workers. The whittling away of the forty-hour week was sternly criticized and opposed by the great trade-union federation. Apparently MM. Chautemps and Bonnet decided that it was dangerous to make further concessions to the right while the existing commitments of the Radical Socialist Party to the People's Front program remained unchanged. Under the familiar camouflage of anti-Communism, the Chautemps-Bonnet team sought to impose its views and held the cabinet crisis as a club over the people.

It needs to be emphasized that the occasion of this cabinet crisis was not the program of the People's Front, *but the departure from that program by the Chautemps-Bonnet government.* Herein lies the explanation for the remarkable resilience exhibited by the People's Front throughout this crisis. The Socialist Party voted down a resolution introduced by Leon Blum, which would have committed it to participation in a second Chautemps cabinet without Communist representation. Indeed, it was the Socialists who forced the fall of Chautemps by their collective resignation when the premier repudiated Communist support. The Radical Socialist Party is itself no unit on this issue and fully half the party would bolt an alliance with the right. Indeed, M. Chautemps has been careful to reaffirm his support of the People's-Front program, and this is good testimony of that program's hold upon the French people.

It appears that the cabinet crisis will be weathered by an interim ministry which will carry on until harmony is reached or a new election is ordered. In any event, it would be most difficult, if not impossible, for a cabinet without both Socialist and Communist support to survive on the basis of the last general election. The gloomy prophets ought to remember that the French People's Front has weathered other storms.

The Shameful Filibuster

THE filibuster against the anti-lynching bill in the Senate has been going on thirteen days at this writing. A handful of senators are blocking the known desire of no less than seventy-three senators to pass the bill. In the special session the filibustering tactics succeeded, partly because of the pressure of time, but now the reactionaries appear to be running into stiffer opposition. There is talk both of invoking the cloture rule to shut off debate, and of tiring the filibusterers out by holding night sessions.

And what, after all, is the bill which has halted all business in the Senate for two weeks, which the reactionaries talk of as certain to bring about the ruination of the country? It is a bill to implement the provisions of the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution.

Section 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment says:

> Nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

And Section 5 provides:

> The Congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

With this clear constitutional basis the anti-lynching bill provides that when state or other government officials fail to protect a prisoner from a lynch mob, or conspire with a lynch mob, or fail to prosecute the members of the lynch mob, the federals courts shall take jurisdiction. There are provisions for the payment of money damages to the victim of a lynch mob. Failure to arrest or indict the lynchers for more than thirty days after a lynching will be *prima facie* evidence of neglect and bring the anti-lynching law into operation.

The bill is therefore an exceedingly simple one. It says that the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution is no longer to be a dead letter in its application to victims of lynch law, who are almost invariably Negroes. It is a shamefully belated attempt to wipe out one of the foulest blots on the history of this nation.

Hugo Gellert

V. I. LENIN

April 22, 1870—January 21, 1924

A Shift in Tactics?

THE word coöperation—coöperation between government and "business"—is increasingly heard from the biggest representatives of monopoly capitalism, and one of the reasons for this apparent shift in tactics probably is the situation in the Supreme Court. The appointment of Solicitor-General Stanley Reed to Justice Sutherland's seat gives the liberals a clear majority, and now there are revived rumors of the impending retirement of Justice McReynolds, another reactionary, who will be seventy-six on February 3.

As the court will be composed with Reed, New Deal legislation would not meet a hostile majority, and Wall Street must feel it is losing its ultimate barrier against a program of social security. In this situation it would appeal to the strategists of the big monopolies to walk a little more softly, talk a little more sparingly about every bill for the relief of human needs being an assault on the Constitution—and redouble their efforts to smash the organized labor movement, which with the farmers forms the backbone of the overwhelming national support for the New Deal. If the interpreter of the Constitution, the Supreme Court, is likely to uphold a bill which Wall Street attacks as unconstitutional, there is much use in raising the issue of the Constitu

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tion. But if by skillful and persistent Red-baiting the labor movement can be stopped in its advance, divided and routed, not much legislation that threatens to curb the power of the monopolists is apt to force its way through the legislative mill.

As one weapon turns in its hand capitalism brings another into play. The Red-baiting campaign is still on the increase, and will continue to be pushed for all it is worth; for far more than it is worth, since reports from the centers of basic industry do not give any cause for discouragement about the way organized labor is reacting to the attacks.

The Publishers Protest

THE firm anti-Nazi statement issued by former Ambassador Dodd last week was followed almost immediately by an equally vigorous protest against fascism signed by forty-eight leading American publishers. In their open letter, which is an extremely gratifying expression in favor of a free press, the publishers declared their intention not to participate in the International Congress of Publishers scheduled to be held in Leipzig this year. The congress will have as its "special sponsor" that notorious booklover, Paul Josef Goebbels. The session will be confronted with a resolution which states that the German Publishers' Association favors "the establishment of an international censorship agreement" whose "purpose is suppression at the source of all books libeling the head of a state or the sacred institutions of a state through misrepresentation of history."

In rejecting the invitation to collaborate in this assault on intellectual freedom, the American publishers stated the issue plainly. The congress, they point out,

> will be a display of ventriloquism: the publishing trade will be the puppet, but the voice will be the voice of German bureaucracy. . . . Furthermore we may surmise that the National Socialist Party will utilize foreign participation at Leipzig as a means of making the German public believe that the present regime is approved by the outside world, since they used the Olympic games and the Heidelberg University celebration for like propaganda. Participation in a meeting in Germany, with all the implications of such coöperation, would be a contradiction of the very essence of our function as publishers. Our trade is a living symbol of the ideal of a free press and its corollaries, free speech and free assemblage.

Suppressing the Salary Lists

ON January 9, some newspapers carried press association stories on the 1936 salaries of $15,000 and over paid to a large number of corporation executives. Such stories have been based on reports made public annually by the House Ways and Means Committee. The original data are tax returns made to the Treasury Department. Publicity was required under the Revenue Act of 1934. However, this year, Chairman Doughton of the Ways and Means Committee permitted the press services to see the salary lists for only a few hours on January 8. Then he announced that the rest of the Washington newspapermen—numbering some five hundred—could see the data on one day only, January 11. Although these salary reports, under the law, have been available to the public in the past, Labor Research Association informs us that individuals who have made attempts to get this information in the last few days have been denied access to it.

Chairman Doughton seems to have taken it upon himself to suppress the bulk of the 1936 salary reports and keep it from the public. For the time allowed for the press to copy these lists could permit the coverage of only a fraction of the thousands of names which the report includes. Last year Doughton sponsored a bill which the reactionaries had clamored for and which the House passed —over the opposition of Farmer-Laborites, Progressives, and a few Democrats—to repeal the salary publicity provisions of the 1934 law.

The excuse which Doughton gave is the same he gives for his arbitrary-like suppression of the information last week—that the information might be used for "sucker lists." The wealthy might be subjected to a few more charity or sales appeals for their secretaries to throw in the wastebasket. Long before 1934 such sucker lists were available to those who could pay for them and they would continue to be available even if the law were repealed.

The public is certainly entitled to information on corporation salaries. As Labor Research Association points out, on the basis of its long service to trade unions and other organizations, it has often found this salary information of vital importance. Many unions have used such data effectively in facing a boss who pleaded poverty to demands for wage increases.

Two things can be done. Doughton's action in practically suppressing the report should be challenged and pressure put on those members of the House Ways and Means Committee who countenanced his action. Progressive senators should be rallied to fight repeal of the publicity feature of the revenue act. Already Senators Bone and Frazier have indicated to Labor Research Association their opposition to the salary repealer which passed the House. This is just the sort of seemingly obscure issue which the reactionaries delight in putting over, simply because progressives are not on the alert. We must not let them feel that they can get away with it.

Two Views of Japan

SOME time ago the press carried stories about a competition between two Japanese soldiers for the honor of being the first to kill one hundred Chinese. After each competitor had killed about sixty-five men, the papers here seemingly lost interest because the winner was never announced. One of our contributors, Harold Ward, came across two items in the December 23, 1937, issue of *Transpacific*, an English-language, Tokyo newspaper put out by the publishers of the *Japan Advertiser*. One item brings the story up to date. By juxtaposing one item against the other, more can be learned about the

FACTS ABOUT THE SOVIET UNION — VIII

The Place of Soviet Industry in the European and World Outputs

	1913		1936	
	In the World	*In Europe*	*In the World*	*In Europe*
Total output of industry	5	4	2	1
Machine construction	4	3	2	1
Agricultural machine construction	5	3	2	1
Tractors	None in tsarist Russia		2	1
Harvester combines	" " " "		1	1
Automobiles	" " " "		6	4
Including motor trucks	" " " "		2	1
Electric energy	15	7	3	2
Coal	6	5	4	3
Iron ore	5	4	2	1
Steel	5	4	3	2
Copper	7	3	6	1
Aluminum	None in tsarist Russia		3	2
Gold	4	1	2	1
Superphosphates	16	13	3	1
Beet sugar	2	2	1	1

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nature of the Japanese aggression than from a dozen radio addresses by the mikado's hired man in Washington.

The first is a quotation from the Japanese newspaper *Miyako,* an attempt to state what Japan wants from China.

> Japan has the right and the responsibility to force all the Chinese to forget even the faintest notion of resisting Japan or coöperating with the Communists. It must also turn the whole of China into a land of promise and well-being. Japan has no desire to take Chinese territory. Its sole idea is to save China from its predicament and then lay the foundations of permanent peace in the Orient. Chinese territory must be Chinese. What Japan wants is Chinese coöperation with Japan in the sense that the two countries will rise or fall together. This is Japan's answer to "How can China be disposed of?"

And the other explains how the above aims are being realized.

> The winner of the competition between Sub-Lieutenant Toshiaki Mukai and Sub-Lieutenant Iwao Noda to see who would be the first to kill one hundred Chinese with his Yamato sword has not been decided, the Nichi Nichi reports from the slopes of Purple Mountain, outside Nanking. Mukai has a score of one hundred and five and his rival dispatched one hundred and five men, but the two contestants have found it impossible to determine which passed the one-hundred mark first. Instead of settling it with a discussion, they are going to extend the goal by fifty.
>
> Mukai's blade was slightly damaged in the competition. He explained that this was the result of cutting a Chinese in half, helmet and all. The contest was "fun," he declared, and he thought it a good thing that both men had gone over the one-hundred mark without knowing that the other had done so.

Hoover's "Peace" Program

HERBERT HOOVER'S late bid for permanent obscurity deals with peace as only the perfectly mildewed reactionary mind can deal with it. It is important as the archetype of a reactionary peace program. Mr. Hoover wants a big army and a big navy. He wants neutrality. He wants neither economic sanctions nor embargoes nor boycotts. He views the western hemisphere as the special preserve of the United States, so he advocates action "to repel aggression" against any part of the hemisphere, but nowhere else.

The most significant aspect of this program is the tie-up between isolationist neutrality and large-scale militarism. The reactionary logic on this point is simple. If the United States renounces coöperative methods of preserving peace, then it must have a big army and navy for self-protection against all comers. The isolationists clamor against collective security because they charge that it means war; but it is isolationism, precisely isolationism, which dovetails with the program of the big army and navy crowd.

A policy of concerted action for peace would make unnecessary the present suicidal plans for expensive rearmament. The democratic nations can today more than hold their own—if they will act collectively. It is only when collective action is renounced that encouragement is given to the militarists. The Hoover "peace" program proves this in particularly pointed fashion.

John Mac

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FORSYTHE'S PAGE

Wanted: Great Songs

WITH the tentativeness of a man walking on broken beer bottles in his bare feet, I venture upon the subject of poetry. This requires more courage than I usually have because my only other attempts at the subject have been bad for my morale. What happens first is that the poets give me a commiserating smile, the same used by uncles on cute but annoying nieces, and after that they expose my ignorance, convict me in my own mind as an insensitive clod, and end by annihilating me.

The only reason I bring it up at all is that I have mastered the John Dewey system of anticipation. I'm going to narrow the discussion to a point where nobody will have a word to say. At the outset I am going to admit that anything anybody says about poetry is all right with me. If I say that I am in sympathy with Mr. Lee Hays of Mena, Ark., and Mr. R. W. Lalley of London, Ontario, who wrote in this magazine several weeks ago asking for poetry that the workers could understand, I hasten to add that nobody is more eager than myself to grant a poet the privilege of writing as he pleases. Because a poem does not interest me is no sign that it isn't a poem. That much I admit. However, I still think the Messrs. Hays and Lalley have a point.

Just as in the field of the novel it most certainly is no literary crime to follow James Joyce rather than Mark Twain, it is just as surely a misfortune from my point of view. Suffering as I do from a chronic case of infantile leftism, I am desperately anxious that in these tragic days anything that comes from our point of view should have the very widest opportunity of being read. But that is only my hope. I don't insist that the artist should follow it. I have always thought that writers like John O'Hara and James M. Cain have styles which would be admirable for a proletarian novelist. Their writing is simple, eminently readable, and yet of high quality. Before you begin throwing things at me, I beg to remind you that John Steinbeck is an author with the same virtues. He may not be our revolutionary hope but he could be and I hope he will be. (At this point I apologize in advance for everything.)

I know so little about poetry that I can't bring great lines to the surface at will, but several months ago I saw a movie short dealing with Robert Burns. It had a distinctly radical theme and dealt with the snubs Burns had to endure from the nobility who had once fawned upon him. The climax of the picture was a dinner party at the home of his nobs where Rabby rose and recited, "A Man's a Man for A' That." He might not be rich, he might not be noble, he might not be dressed in fashion—but a man was a man for all that.

For three or four minutes nothing happened on the screen but Robert Burns reciting that poem, and it was one of the most effective things I have ever seen. The audience which saw the film the night I was present belonged more to the nobles than to the Rabby Burnses, but when the poem ended there was a spontaneous outburst of applause. As poetry it was so thrilling that even people who wanted to hate it couldn't resist it. If I'm told now that it isn't poetry at all, I'll be hurt because I've been banking on that example to floor some of my poetic hecklers.

But if it isn't a poem, it is an excellent example of something, and perhaps that is what Messrs. Hays, Lalley, and Forsythe want. Titles mean nothing to me. If what we desire so eagerly is doggerel, nobody is going to offend me with the accusation. Probably what I am after is balladry, and if balladry doesn't mean something that can be sung I'm sunk. . . . Because that's what, among other things, I want.

I want the fervor and incandescence that comes from great poetry and I want it to touch the heart. Eli Siegel used to be a great fellow for pointing out the poetry in things that hitherto had never been accused of it. I was always a bit dubious when he held forth on the *Star Spangled Banner,* but he convinced me entirely about the *St. Louis Blues.* I think "I want to see the evening sun go down" is a beautiful line. I don't think it was intended as poetry, but it is poetry nevertheless. That would seem to indicate that I believe poetry is an accident, but of course I have no such idea. It may mean that I think of poetry too much as melody, but that can be attributed to my rearing. As I think back at it now a curious thing comes to me. I was raised on Robert Burns, but on the *songs* of Burns rather than the poetry. The lines do not remain with me (with a few exceptions), but the tunes are as fresh as if my father were playing them again for me this moment.

So on the basis of this memory, I make another reservation. Perhaps it is not poetry I want at all, even doggerel, but great songs. That may quite possibly be true, but I think it is just as true that great lyric poetry has a way of stimulating great music and particularly great revolutionary music. When the workers ask plaintively for poetry they can recite aloud, they are yearning for poetry that can be sung, and we have not had enough of that lately. The problems of the serious poets are their own and I have no intention of criticizing them, but isn't there somewhere among all these talented people a poet whose work is so simple and so stirring that the words fairly shout to be set to music? The times are difficult and the road is hard and we need support. Such support comes not through the intellect alone; it comes from the heart.

It occurs to me now that Burns may have written the words to old tunes, but that matters even less. They are lovely words, and they have been a solace and an inspiration for more than a century. I do not agree that the art of song has been lost. In all periods it has been a part of revolutionary ardor, and if I have a complaint against our poets it is that not one of them has done what Joe Hill did in the days of the Wobblies. When they hear workers protesting that the poems which appear in the NEW MASSES mean nothing to them, it is not a full answer to say that the workers know nothing of poetry. That may be conceded and still it makes no point.

If it needs a second-rate poet to do this, for the love of heaven let us have a second-rate poet. I want the struggling people of this world to have all the help they can get, and for this I make no apology to poet, artist, or author. Perhaps this is a period in history when survival is more important than art. I don't make it as an argument; I simply state it. I know that I yearn for a poem that will set me cheering; I long for a new revolutionary song that will set my heart afire. And I think that is what my friends in Mena, Ark., and London, Ontario, mean when they protest about our poetry. It is not so much a complaint about the poets, although they must by nature resent what does not fulfill them; it is a long and passionate cry for help. The world is bitter; the world is sick; the way is hard. We shall win, but we need help in the fight.

ROBERT FORSYTHE.

Mary Whitefield

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They Call It Service

By Lucy Randolph

THE narrow streets of Knoxville were turgid with people on that second Saturday morning before Thanksgiving Day. Apparently everybody east of Nashville had come up with Vanderbilt for the game with Tennessee. The department store on Gay Street was as crowded as a hotel lobby, and women surged along the counter where hosiery spilled and writhed out of boxes like curiously flattened snakes. Even with the extra time I had allowed myself, I was going to have to do some clever stalling to get the particular girl I wanted at the right time. But when Hurd said put a test on a certain clerk at a certain time, he meant that clerk at that time.

So I edged into the mob, keeping one eye on the clock over the elevator and the other on the girl. Red had put a test on her the day before and described her to me when we turned in our reports at the hotel that night. Exactly at ten-thirty she was waiting on me, courteous enough but plainly a bit nervous because I couldn't decide between gun-metal and smoke-gray and let her get to the other women waiting for her.

Finally I selected a pair and gave her a five-dollar bill. While she squirmed around the other clerks, I moved down the counter away from them and looked about for bait for the follow-up trap. Leaning over the counter to reach for another pair of hose, I caught the cash register reading —A-$1.00. When she brought my hose back and gave me the ticket and four one-dollar bills, I looked uncertain for a moment, then said suddenly, "I believe I'll take two more of these. You can just put them in the bag with this pair if you will." I picked up the hose and held out two of the bills.

Automatically she flipped open her ticket book. "Why, certainly," she said. "Just a minute and I'll make. . . ."

"Oh, that's all right," I assured her hurriedly, but not too hurriedly. "Don't bother. I'm in a hurry, and I'll take them along."

Turning, I squirmed away from the counter. Hurd's rule for a follow-up was "Get out as quick as you can—and don't look back!"

Well, I had done my job. She had the two dollars, and neither of us had a ticket to show for them. The other girls were at the other end of the counter (that was part of the routine—never make a test in sight of another clerk); she could pocket that money and no one would be the wiser.

On the second floor I made three tests, and two on the fourth. Then, bristling with bundles, I plunged into the street and zigzagged toward the hotel. Walking was difficult, for my ungainly packages kept snagging on passersby and slipping out of my arms—kitchen ware, children's dresses, rugs, even a dress I could have worn myself if I could have kept it.

Three blocks, and I turned down a side street toward the second-rate, out-at-elbows hotel where the crew stayed. Hurd always put his crews up at such places; it cost less, and was less conspicuous. He usually stayed at the town's best hotel, in order to help put up a front when he dealt with store managers.

Worry gibbered noiselessly in my ear as I walked. How in heaven's name could I remember all the things I was supposed to remember with photographic accuracy? One slight bit of forgetfulness, one small slip, one human error on my part might well cause some one to lose his job—and, more important, lose with it his reputation for efficiency and dependability, his self-confidence, his self-respect.

Finally in my room, I flopped into a chair, spilling bundles like a disgusted Santa Claus. Now to organize all the facts I had gathered during the morning. I fished around in my purse and brought out the slip of paper on which I had hastily jotted cash-register readings, cashier numbers, descriptions of clerks, the layout of departments and floors, and other information. You had to do that, or you'd never remember all the details of every sale. Make three or four tests, then stop in a rest room or at a soda fountain and make notes. Then three or four more, and more notes, and so on.

THAT had been the way it was in Nashville, too, during those ten days after I joined the crew there. And that had been the way things were in Memphis—two long, hectic, exhausting weeks of frantic hurry and fatiguing checking and rechecking and reports. Each of us got a work sheet every morning, specifying the stores we were to cover, the persons we were to check, the sort of tests we were to make, and the exact hours we were to make them. They used me mostly for department and drug-store work and women's specialty shops, making purchases men would be unlikely to make. But often I worked with one or two others of the crew and sometimes alone in all sorts of places. We had no regular hours; fourteen hours of work ending with a drug-store check at nine or ten o'clock at night might be followed by two or three hours of "staff meeting" in the hotel, during which Hurd harangued us and gave us dynamic pep talks and "set up" the next day's routine.

There were eight of us in this crew—Hurd, the big boss; Howell, his man Friday and advance man; Mr. and Mrs. Flexner, who helped check purchases back to the store managers when we closed out in a town; Kitty Barnes; Lou Ottinger; Red Andrews; and myself. Hurd had half a dozen or so crews in the South. Most of the time I was with this bunch, however, he stayed with us. It was in September that I joined them; between then and March we worked intermittently in Memphis, Knoxville, Atlanta, Birmingham, Montgomery, and Nashville again. Nashville was their best town; they usually worked it two or three times a year.

Hurd's "service" was basically the checking of store employees and sales-persons to determine their honesty and efficiency. He contracted with store owners or managers for a flat fee of from twenty or thirty dollars to two hundred and fifty or more, depending upon the size of the stores and the extent of the check. He paid his own operating costs, which included salaries, traveling and hotel expenses for the crew, and the money necessary to make all test purchases. This purchase money was refunded by the managers when their goods was returned to them.

In addition to his stated fees, Hurd had another source of revenue in his "confessions." I learned about this from Red. Hurd would have some one caught taking money in a real or manufactured short sale or error brought to his hotel room, and by one means or another force that person to sign a confession of his crime and an agreement to make complete restitution to the store, usually at so much a week. According to Red, half this amount went to the manager or owner and the other half to Hurd. This pleasant little routine of obtaining confessions and repayment agreements was known as "sweating." Most managers and owners had only a vague idea of our methods, although some refused to allow any of their employees to be sweated.

Hurd apparently worked on the theory that it was worth much more to a manager to know his employees were dishonest and inefficient than to be shown they were honest and capable. Most of our tests were straights and follow-ups, but every test we made was designed to give the clerk a foolproof chance to pocket money for his own benefit. A few times I have gone—almost at dawn, it seemed—to a suburban drug store to check a clerk when he was the only person besides myself in the store. Had he been dishonest he could easily have forgotten the sale.

Wholesale hardware stores were the hardest to make follow-ups in, for you couldn't just pick up one or two items and walk out with them. Once in a vast, dingy building near the river in Memphis I walked miles along ceiling-high shelves selecting stock for the little general store my father and I operated about fifty miles from town. The clerk obligingly noted all the items and returned with me to the office, where we waited for them to be sent up and I tried frantically to keep one question ahead of him in his friendl

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interest in my fictitious business. That innocent cross-examination taught me always to have a plausible name and address and occupation ready for instant use. On this check, I did manage to get away with two fifty-cent feed scoops without a ticket for them, but the spectacle I made carrying them back to the hotel and through the lobby ruined my triumph.

Sometimes we even tested personnel and accounting divisions. In that big department store in Birmingham I manufactured enough authenticity and competence to get a job. In the same store, before that, I had got a check cashed. Both bad marks against the store, of course.

Once Red ambled into a gift department, looking at everything with bland curiosity. He selected two decks of cards and gave the clerk a dollar bill. Before she could write a ticket, however, he was asking about ash trays, then card tables, then book ends, then smoking stands—all the while rambling on as if he might buy everything or nothing. Then he changed his mind about two or three items and substituted others, all of different prices, of course. The poor clerk was fast losing patience and had already lost track of what the idiot did want and how much money he had given her. I think Red came out of that with about three things less than he had paid for.

The variety of merchandise in drug stores made them good testing grounds. Sometimes, too, one of the boys would go in and try to trick a clerk into preparing some sort of medicine only a licensed pharmacist was permitted to concoct. One night in Atlanta Hurd sent Howell, Kitty, Red, and myself out in the car to check five drug stores in succession. The first two were pleasant enough, but the third double malted milk and sandwich apiece began to tax us. We had to order enough to make a good test on the curb boy and soda jerk. The fourth store found us hopelessly overstuffed. Red rummaged about in the car and found a spare gasoline tin, into which we poured what seemed to be gallons of sticky sweetness. Around the corner, we dumped it into the gutter and then drove six blocks to another store to repeat the entire process.

Sometimes as an incentive to more zealous work Hurd would offer a bonus of a dollar for every short sale turned in. The increase in shorts reported in towns where this bonus was offered over those reported in towns where it was not offered was remarkable. Some members of the crew were particularly adept. In Knoxville, I checked one woman in a department store twice, about four days apart. She checked perfect for me, and also for Red, Kitty, Lou, and Howell. Mrs. Flexner, however, checked her only once, but she showed up short. In Memphis, where no bonus had been offered, Mrs. Flexner reported 10 short sales, although Memphis is nearly three times the size of Knoxville.

I was never present at a sweat job, but I heard and saw enough about them to draw certain tenable conclusions. Red told me Hurd set the stage carefully. The "sweater" was placed on a low seat and made to face his questioners. Question after question was hurled at him, some directly, some obliquely, some pointed, some apparently having nothing to do with the matter at hand. Hurd never locked the door of his room; he kept on the side of the law there. But the man being questioned was not allowed to leave. Sometimes his questioners would leave him alone for ten or fifteen minutes, but outside in the corridor one of the crew would be stationed unostentatiously.

The nearest I ever came to being "in" on a sweat job was in Knoxville, when Hurd hurriedly called me to his room to witness a confession by a clerk I had checked short a day or so earlier. I had seen him go to Hurd's room about two hours before, a tall, well-groomed chap in his middle twenties. He seemed fairly poised, and while apparently he was not a person of remarkably strong character, seemed a decent sort. When Hurd called me to the room, however, the man looked nervous and distraught. His hair was rumpled, his face flushed and damp, his vest unbuttoned, his collar open, and his tie limp and crooked. He looked beaten and guilty and ashamed.

Hurd met me at the door and thrust a paper in my hand, demanding that I sign my full name. I got only a glimpse of it, but it seemed to be a confession that the clerk had taken so much money and agreed to pay it back in certain amounts. I signed. Then Hurd brusquely told me to go into the room and look at him. I looked, but only for a moment, for Hurd hustled me back out. Thinking it over later, I wondered whether the process had any legal or other sort of significance. Certainly I wouldn't be accepted as a witness; I hadn't seen the man write or sign anything, nor was he in my presence when I signed that paper.

John Heliker

I do not doubt that that particular clerk was guilty. But it is possible and certainly probable that Hurd has secured many confessions from men and women who were not guilty but had merely made mistakes which they were not allowed to explain. It was part of his routine in such processes that the persons to be sweated should not know why they were being called to the hotel or whom they would meet there.

The final period of checking up and checking purchases back to store managers was always hectic. The bunch usually were housed in three or four connecting rooms, and on checking days I had to be up and dressed and have my room presentable by seven o'clock. During those days my room was used by anybody and everybody for everything that couldn't be done elsewhere, for most of the other rooms were filled with packages. On checking-out day they were collected and piled in separate groups according to stores. When the manager came to claim his stock and pay for it and Hurd's fee, each package would be unwrapped, shown to him, and checked off. Those which had been instrumental in revealing a short sale or error usually were weeded out for special attention.

Usually only Hurd and the Flexners took part in this, but Hurd would keep us all within call. He would not allow us even as far away as the lobby, on the theory that he might need us at any moment to identify a clerk or straighten out some tangle about a purchase. That meant that we loafed about in the corridor or gathered in my room, smoking and talking and grumbling and wondering when, if ever, we would get through and be off to somewhere else, and wondering also where we would go. In Knoxville and Atlanta and Birmingham I had to keep my bag packed for instant departure, only to unpack when we discovered after a day of waiting that we wouldn't be able to get away that night.

So we went, rocketing and scurrying through the mid-South. From arrival to departure, one town was much like another—a week or ten days or two weeks or more of work and worry and nervous strain, always feeling exhausted and jittery. And always the dreary, jerking parade was the same—faces, counters, sales tickets, faces, reports, packing, waiting, faces, unpacking, getting tired enough to drop and too tired to sleep, wrapping purchases, checking out, catching a bus, driving half the night, shabby little side-street hotels, faces. At this moment, I suppose, Hurd and Howell and Red and the rest are somewhere between Richmond and Dallas and Miami and St. Louis. And somewhere inside and outside that section are other Hurd crews, and crews of other companies, all doing much the same thing. And behind ten thousand counters are a hundred thousand clerks who may or may not know.

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Miami's Anti-Semitic Jews

By Robert Gessner

THERE had been a large meeting for Spain at the Hotel Fleetwood, and a keen audience gave freely for medical supplies because they knew that "the defeat of fascism in Spain would result in a retreat of fascist agents from the North and South Americas." After the meeting, a group of grim-faced boys stopped me. "Spain is terribly important," said their spokesman, Ben Falk, "but you should speak about the Hitlers closer to home."

"Do you know that it's almost impossible for a Jewish boy to get a job in any of the Jewish hotels in Miami Beach?" said another, a tall athlete called Myers.

Miami Beach has been built and extended almost entirely by Jews. Eighty percent of all its hotels are owned and operated by Jews. Miami Beach is virtually a Jewish suburb of New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago. Here, apart from national solidarity, it should be simply good business to hire Jewish bellhops, waiters. In the summer, at Atlantic [illegible] Catskills, Berkshires, and Adirondacks the same owners and managers hire Jews exclusively so their guests may feel more at home. Some summer hotels are noted for their college-boy employees who are expected to aid in entertaining the guests. And so, in Miami Beach, the charge of Jewish employers' anti-Semitism seemed incredible.

An informal committee, composed of residents and visitors who have been active in the Spain campaign, met and decided to collect testimony from the boys. We held several meetings, and not only were the first charges substantiated, but numerous others were made and verified. For the first meeting word was circulated from mouth to mouth and in three hours dozens of boys collected. They said there were many more, between one hundred and fifty and two hundred, who were unemployed and destitute. Five were living in one room; some were sharing beds on eight-hour shifts; some hadn't seen a hot meal in days; one group was living off the stale bread a friend brought home from the bakery in which he worked. Others caught a few hours' sleep late at night in the lobbies of hotels where a friend was a night clerk, or in the basement if the night watchman was a friend —this in hotels where the guests upstairs pay fifty to seventy-five dollars and up a week, and sleep in ignorance of the management's discrimination.

The boys told their stories, and it was like *Waiting for Lefty*, including the heckling of a "stool" who had his job. But his baiting merely induced some of the bashful ones to speak up. The following experience is typical, and has been attested in an affidavit. Ben Bruckstein and Phil Marasky, about the middle of November 1937, called on Ed Singer of the Edsinger Hotel for a job. They had some difficulty in locating the housekeeper, who finally said, "It really is surprising to see two Jewish boys who are willing to work. In the past I've found that Jewish boys don't care to work." When Mr. Singer was questioned by Miss Clara Mannheimer, a Miami citizen, and the writer, he exclaimed, "I won't hire any Jewish boys because they have too much nerve." Mr. Lasky, the Jewish owner of a Jewish hotel, the Carlton, told Ben Bruckstein, "I do not employ Jewish help." The affidavit continues: "He explained this by saying that 'It would look better to the guests to have a Thomson or a Scott called than to have to summon a bellhop named Ginsberg, Cohen, or Goldstein.' Mr. Lasky also stated that several of his friends, hotel-owners, told him that they would not employ help of Hebrew descent. Mr. Lasky indorsed his friends' policies." Mrs. Ritter, Jewish owner and operator of the Ritter and La Flora hotels, informed boys inquiring for jobs that "I do not employ Jewish help because when the wrinkles leave your stomachs, you will take greater advantages than the Gentile boys." She then requested that the boys stop bothering her.

Sol Kessman testified that Mr. Warburg of the United Majestic Employment Agency told him that Jewish hotel operators instructed Warburg not to send them Jews. Mr. Warburg repeated these instructions to Rabbi Meschaloff of the Miami Beach conservative synagogue. Warburg personally conducted Sol Kessman to Mr. Bergman, the steward of the Floridan, the exclusive kosher hotel, inquiring for a job. Kessman brought references from the Morningside Hotel, N. Y., and is considered an excellent baker. Bergman inferred that Kessman's face was not the type he wanted in his kitchen.

Sol Shendel went to the Victor, large, modern, new, but Mr. Adler had only four Jewish boys on his whole staff. Mr. Adler told a resident delegation that 90 percent of his staff was Jewish, but it was obvious at one glance that this was false. David Cooper testified that Mr. Seymour at the Winkler won't hire Jews if he can help it. Mr. Kurtz, manager of the kosher Tides, the skyscraper hotel, asked several boys if they were Jews and then would not hire them on the grounds that the Tides had Sabbath services. The Tides, nevertheless, works the few Jewish boys it does hire on the Sabbath. Mr. Cohen, one of the owner-leasers of the Tides, admitted discrimination but asserted that many hotels were much more worthy of condemnation than the Tides. The popular and extensive Alamac, run by the family Jacobs, is another prominent kosher hotel. One of its clerks, refusing to disclose his name, said the management hired Gentiles to serve its kosher food, and added that the policy in that hotel and elsewhere was disgraceful.

The evidence continues. There's not one Jewish doorman outside a Jewish hotel on Ocean Drive. The Alamac has one on Collins; the Blackstone discovered this season that its faithful doorman is a Jew, although the name he gave was not. They are keeping him because he is popular.

A committee of residents and visitors called on various hotel owners. They apologetically confirmed the testimony and affidavits. We called on the Miami Beach Hotel Owners' Association, but without satisfaction. The B'nai Brith Anti-Defamation Committee sent a letter to the hotel owners requesting a conference, which would include the representatives of the boys. The boys elected Jules Koslow, M. J. Myers, and Leon Simon as their representatives. The hotel owners failed to attend the meeting. On December 31, the *Jewish Floridian* published the following in an editorial, entitled "Do We Have Jewish Anti-Semites?":

> When several hundred Jewish boys gather to protest against some of our Jewish hotels and charge these hotels with deliberate boycotting of Jewish boys as bellhops or hotel employees, when a Jewish restaurant is charged with deliberately hiring only non-Jewish help, when these same hotels are owned, operated, and directed by Jews as communal workers and leaders, then it is high time that something be done. If these charges be true, and we sincerely hope they are not, then the *Jewish Floridian* will deem it its privilege and duty to expose each and every one of these officers and to call upon every publicity agency throughout the country to direct the attention of the Jewish world to these offensive practices.

This warning has failed to move the hotel owners, many of whom are prominent philanthropists and Zionists. They apparently do not fear adverse publicity. Their attitude puts the question up to the guests, who are on the whole ignorant of this discrimination. They must be informed, as well as guests who will go South now that the season is opening. They should inquire before they register.

In the meanwhile the boys are stranded and some destitute. Some money was raised to feed them and help pay their rent. One boy hadn't seen a quarter in three weeks—in a city where thousands pass hands every minute at the gambling tables. Some boys are jailed for vagrancy. All are fingerprinted and must carry identification cards. If found cardless and jobless, they are jailed and transported to the Georgia line, the Georgia police notified and the boys given six weeks on a chain-gang. The procedure is repeated through the Carolinas. "I don't want to spend a year in jail and on chain-gangs," one boy said, "just because I'm broke and a Jew."

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Goya's Spain Invaded

By Jay Peterson

IN 1808 Napoleon's armies invaded Spain. They were heroically resisted by an unarmed people and eventually were driven out. This was the first decisive set-back for the Corsican militarist. Indeed, it is now recognized as the turning-point in the wars of that period. Today a democratic Spain is repeating that role, and once again is halting the dictators who would trample on her.

A great record was made of that conflict of one hundred and thirty years ago. It is entitled *The Disasters of War,* and it was by Francisco de Goya, famous painter and etcher who was also a social prophet and thinker. If we substitute fascists for French Hussars, nearly everything in these eighty-five etchings will have its perfect counterpart in the war of today. No more timely book has appeared during the season.*

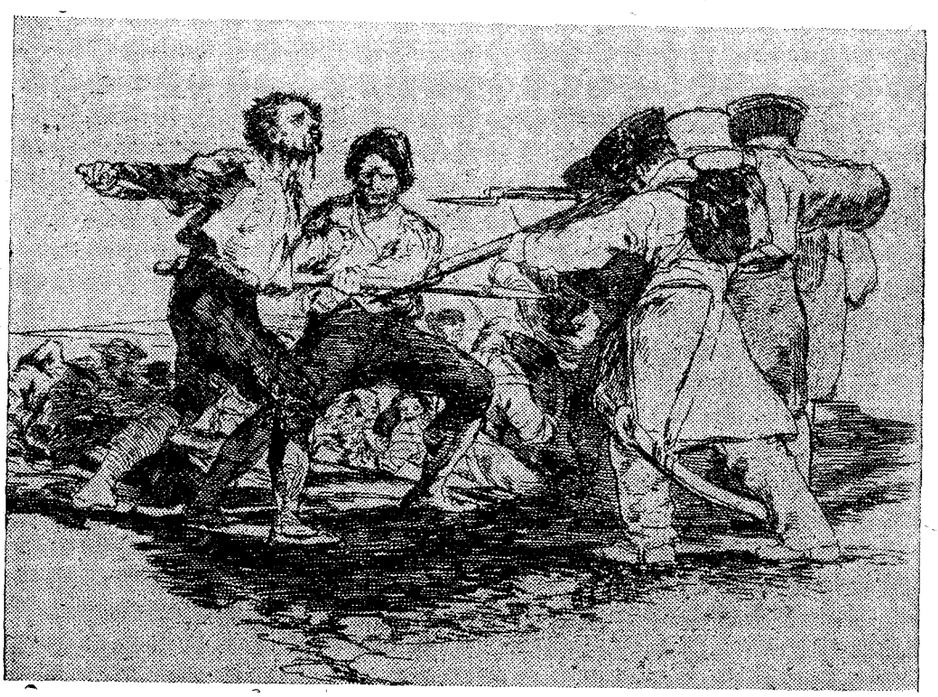
The first of these etchings was made the ear the war opened. It pictures a gaunt ıan, shivering in a cave. A faint illumination reveals his wasted body. Entitled *Gloomy Forebodings of Things to Come,* this is Spain efore the invasion. The second plate comes om Saragossa, the home town of Goya, which he visited in order to see how his people fought under a siege. The title gives his conclusion: *What Valor!* It refers to a young woman—the so-called Maid of Saragossa—lighting a cannon which is much bigger than she is. She stands on a fallen man to reach it. Indeed, she alone survives. Only through her is the fight continued. But where she is calm, the women in another plate are ferocious (*And They Are Like Wild Beasts,* says Goya). Here four of them are fighting off the advancing troops of Napoleon's army. The dominant one in white holds a babe to er back with one hand, while with the other she runs a pike through the groin of a Frenchman. He falls. Farther back, a woman in gray has raised a rock above her head and is about to hurl it at a soldier who is aiming at her. A third woman, white in face and bosom, darker elsewhere, lies wounded on the ground; but she still clutches her knife. A fourth, all black save face and cap, is stabbing a man in the arm-pit.

Now Goya is in the midst of war. He is learning what the invading enemies of his people can do, how they can butcher, burn, rob, pillage because, like the fascists of today, their only aim is to conquer the people for their own purposes. Nowhere is his anguish more clear than in his scenes of rape and executions. In one of the former we see a mother dragged over her own baby, while a bound man, blindfolded, braces himself against the post to which he is tied. In a moment he will be shot. But we do not see his executioners, only the barrels of their guns. Beside him lies a man whose eyes are gone. Farther back, a Napoleonic firing-squad has just killed a man bound to another post. Beyond him rises the top of a third post. Beyond that, no doubt, another. A black sky overlays all this, though dawn shows in a far-off corner. This almost impenetrable sky is the hopelessness of Goya. It is the blackness that he finds in his people's condition. At this point, only his determination to state—as shown by the swift, but revealing, light—permits him to go on at all. But let us not misjudge him, for at this particular period the resistance of the people, through their irregular guerrilla warfare, had not yet shown its powers. All that was evident at the moment was the unspeakable suffering of the people he loved.

There is no end of horrors. The invaders in one plate are stripping dead men; *They Equip Themselves,* says the artist. Of another pile of dead he can say only, *Bury Them and Be Silent:* the two old mourners might as well go away. Plate after plate is devoted to the dead, or, if not to the dead, to the wounded and dying. One recalls Whitman's rows and rows of cots during the Civil War, though here the terror is greater than the pity. No pity ever enters here; Goya seems to say: this is beyond pity, these murderers are oblivious to any feeling. Therefore the ironic title, *This Is Not to Be Looked At,* in the etching of men and women, old people and infants, who beg for life from a firing-squad whose bayonet-points alone are visible, as if they were insensate things responsive only to mechanical orders.

No, there was no pity in war. The French militarists stamped on all alike, man or woman, living or dead. That is what Goya means when he employs the title *Charity* for a plate which shows naked corpses being dumped into a pit. Nor does he cry out when he sees the mob beat a man in the city. Comprehendingly he writes, *Populace. . . .* For he knows that the people have suffered more than they can bear.

And then Goya becomes desperate at what the invaders have done. Women's bodies spill in a shattered house. Hussars quarter a tim. A brute in high fur cap sword after stabbing at two bou from ropes. *That Is Strong,* mock Apparently there were Goerings in that day, too. Even more heartless is the unlit amusement he finds in a Bonapartist's face, as he looks at a man who hangs from his neck. *This Is Still Worse,* declares Goya in the next, where a naked man has been impaled on a tree-trunk; one sees the point of it between his shoulder-blades. Then he becomes furious, crying *Barbarians!* when enemy soldiers fire



Etching by Goya

"With Reason or Without"

THE DISASTERS OF WAR, *by Francisco de Goya. ..ty-five etchings reproduced in actual size, with introduction by Elie Faure. Oxford University ss.* $1.50.

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Etching by Goya

"Look After Them, Then Turn to the Others"

at a bound man's back from a distance of a foot. As the final atrocity he presents three naked bodies on a tree. One is tied to it standing upright; another, upside down, has head and shoulders on the ground; a third is lashed by the knees to a branch and hangs downward, while its severed head rests farther out on the limb. Below it hang the ·putated arms of the torso. Such atrocities ·dentical with the wholesale massacre in ·g of Badajoz, and were perpetrated ·me reason.

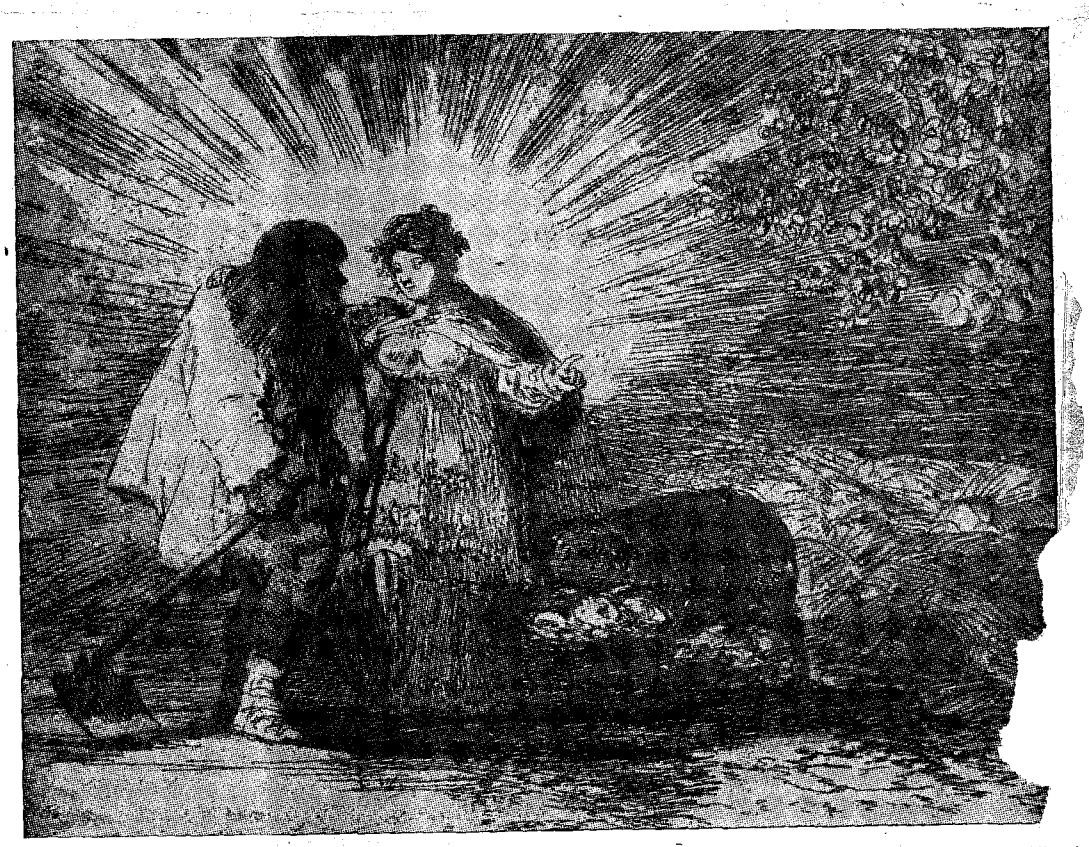
s show the clergy in flight, frequently conical captions. When a monk is ·d, Goya merely says, *This Is Bad.* His refugees in particular are heartrending. They are fleeing, they seem huddled, an obscure but near menace is behind them. In one a tiny child is weeping and trying to keep up with the men carrying off its dead mother. Here the background is Stygian and the figures like nightmares in white. The precision of the drawing makes this the more terrible. It is as if the line cried and shattered, sprang and snapped, laughed and howled; as if it spoke for the entire Spanish people. Etching like this—epic, transcendent, incisive, immediate—had not been known since Rembrandt. The noble Dutchman could show terror, as in the *Boy Running,* but there was a softness to it, a kind of musicality. It was depicted in terms of a glistening black sympathy. Here the light indicts, and the artist is one with his outraged people as he employs it. Rembrandt had always a new well of gentleness, Goya another extremity of remorselessness. They are, if you wish, complementary masters.

BUT slowly the horror yields to sublimity. In *They Won't Arrive in Time,* a young woman, dead, is being lowered to the ground. She, at any rate, will never know rape. Here the black in half of the background is like a dirge, and the whites alternate softly with a kind of comfort. A resolution of terror has come. This mood is present again when Goya shields us from death with a surrounding circle of silently grieving onlookers. The obverse of this is an indignation which can no longer contain itself. As well-clad, well-fed conquerors gaze away from starving Spaniards, Goya cries out, *Do They Belong to Another Race?*

This is a prelude to the most hopeless plates in the series. There is nothing but desolation in *Nobody Could Help Them.* One sees a well-nigh complete black in *The Death Beds,* and a pitchy sky in *For the Common Grave.* Goya seems to ask himself: When will this end? Where is there hope? Finally, the poor are worshiping a skeleton in a glass case, and the monarchists, with the French driven out, are bearing back the symbols of slavery and superstition. The war has ended; the enemy is gone. But Goya can only say, *Nada (Nothing).* Now, one more step and his education is complete.

THE NEW king, Ferdinand, has blind reactionaries for his leaders, and bats give men their spiritual instruction. The cats and the owls are on high. Men have suffered too much to rebel, thinks Goya. *Truth Is Dead,* he cries in one of his greatest etchings, as bigots and reactionaries rejoice about the fair and stricken woman who symbolizes all that was dearest to him. But she gives forth a new radiance in the next plate, the court and the clerics start back, and in the following one, almost the last of the series, *Truth,* re-risen, embraces the workman with his shovel. These etchings prove, therefore, that Goya was a social thinker as well as one of the master artists.

As such, his book belongs in the library of every social-minded person. This particular edition has lacks—the line sometimes loses its values, for example—but it is the best at its price. It is also commendable for its introduction, one of the last contributions from Elie Faure, French art critic and ally of the People's Front, who died last October. This is his memorial and Goya's testament.



Etching by Go

"This Is the Truth"

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READERS' FORUM

Heil Southbury!

E NEW MASSES:

T summer the country was treated to the lifying spectacle of some thousands of husky German-Americans uniformed as Nazi -troopers" drilling, goose-stepping, drinking quantities of beer, and "Heiling" lustily in hirty-eight camps of the German-American hat sprang up like mushrooms near our cities. memorable week-end at the largest of these located in the New York metropolitan area, fascists united with their Nazi comrades, and *ezza* shared the place of musical honor with *rst Wessel Lied.* Black shirts and brown in making loud and invidious comparisons the boob democracies such as the one they sided in and their own puissant fatherlands, ie amazed citizenry of the liberal-democratic *ood outside the fences and made strange*

i this same German-American Bund decided iase one hundred and seventy-eight acres of Connecticut countryside near Southbury for st and largest camp (to be known as Camp von Steuben), it doubtless expected no an the feeble, unorganized opposition that eted the establishment of its other camps. zis' well-known contempt for the slowness ficiency of democratic processes would seem been well founded, for to date none of the ities afflicted with these camps had been able ize public opinion in time to do anything was too late. But this was the first time invaded New England, and they had reckthout that hoary and venerable Yankee in-n, the town meeting

hbury is a quiet little town of some twelve d souls, nestling in the foothills of the Berkn western Connecticut. It is a residential and *g community, and has known little excitement* he elm-shaded streets echoed to the tramp of ental Army feet a hundred and sixty years

when, on a pleasant Sabbath afternoon in November, farmers in the vicinity saw some r forty Germans from New York busily enin chopping down trees and clearing away n the pleasant Kettletown district, where wealthy New Yorkers have summer resithey constituted themselves twentieth-cenul Reveres and spread the news of the iminvasion throughout the countryside.

he following Wednesday an indignation was held in the nearby South Britain Connal Church, a meeting which closed with nd the singing of the *Star-Spangled Banner.* roughly-aroused citizens then held another at the Southbury Community Hall and or-Outpost No. 1 of the United Americans, filling-station proprietor by the name of Holmes as its first "Lieutenant." This meeta dramatic turn when a military-looking ode down the aisle, wheeled, and gave a full-arm Nazi salute. This intrepid Daniel nptly bounced from the lion's den, and Yale sent smiled when he was later identified as but a Harvard M.A. by the name of Walo had done the whole thing on a bet.

ll this was rather obvious comic relief, but th something was brewing. When the conermans returned on Sunday, December 5, menced chopping down trees, the town constable, backed by several deputies and a warrant from a grand juror, appeared suddenly on the scene and arrested two worthies, by name Gustave Korn of New Rochelle and Richard Koehler of Mount Vernon, for working on Sunday in violation of an old Connecticut blue law. They were promptly arraigned before the local justice of the peace, who had to crawl out from beneath a car on which he was working in his garage to grant them continuances on bail of seventy-five dollars each.

Boiling mad and almost dead broke after raising the bail money, the Nazis went home, and shortly thereafter proclamations and manifestos boomed forth from Hitler's American Führer, Fritz Kuhn of New York. The Bund was misunderstood. It was not against Americans at all, but only against Communists and Jews. Southburyites would love the Bund as soon as they could disabuse their minds of Jewish and Communist propaganda. The program of the Bund was like that of the Boy Scouts. Getting madder and madder, Kuhn threatened to have every citizen of Southbury who lifted his hand on Sunday arrested. He also hinted that the Bund had received a good offer for its land from Father Divine, and might sell if things were not straightened out in short order.

But Southbury was adamant to his threats, and on December 14 a special town meeting adopted a zoning ordinance which placed the Bund property in a "farming and residential" district and prohibited marching, drilling, and military training with or *without weapons except by the regular armed forces* of the United States. Democracy, at least in New England, had shown that it could act with vigor and dispatch when a crisis arose.

Confused and taken aback by this prompt action, the Nazis retired to Yorkville to lick their wounds and ponder the situation. A Bund camp without marching, drilling, and democracy-baiting is like pretzels without beer.

Their chief mistake, it would seem, is a geographical one. They should have located their camp about ten miles to the east within the city limits of Waterbury, where the city administration, as evidenced by its actions last summer in prohibiting the showing of the motion picture *Spain in Flames* and yet permitting the showing of an Italian fascist film called *Il Duce,* is not unfriendly to totalitarian concepts of government.

With democracy in full retreat across the world, what happened in Southbury, insignificant and humorous as it may seem, is a hopeful sign. Democ*racy, in this Connecticut town, made several mis*takes, most notably in invoking a blue law that must be abhorrent to all lovers of liberty, but at least it is not "like a scared rabbit before a rattlesnake." Farmers are pretty good at handling snakes. There will be no "Heiling" in Yankee Doodle land.

Waterbury, Conn. ALSON J. SMITH.

Cementing a People's Front

TO THE NEW MASSES:

SUNDAY afternoon, January 8, I was fortunate enough to hear all the last part of the long talk by Juan Marinello in the Stadium La Polar, over CBOX 9.2. To my knowledge there had been no previous announcement that it was to be broadcast. It lasted until 5:30, and I could hear the large crowd cheering. Reports later had from twenty to thirty thousand there. I do not know why he did not draw as large a crowd as the sixty thousand who came to hear Marcelino Domingo, but I have a hunch that many people were afraid of violence in the case of Marinello, whereas they were not afraid in the case of a widely known intellectual, a foreigner.

I was happy to hear of such a large turnout, anyway, for a man as left as Marinello. His speech was mainly a report on the things he had seen in Spain, all good and well done and well applauded, but his last few sentences were especially apt when he turned to Cuba and showed the absolute necessity of a people's front there. He pulled no punches.

For months we have been hearing mysterious rumors that the Supreme Court was going to declare that Miguel Mariano Gomez had been illegally deprived of the presidency, ruling on his protest against the so-called impeachment. Finally the sordid truth came out—of the justices, only two had dared dismissal by voting for the protest.

The government is showing signs of desperation, *by its closing of the democratic Spanish societies,* its amnesty to the worst assassins of the Machado regime, and its recent approval of payment of the illegal Chase National Bank bonds, a great steal. Their room for demagogic maneuvering is becoming limited, but probably they will try changing presidents again rather than a coup which I believe is doomed to failure for lack of a mass fascist base. The Plan Trienal may have fooled somebody, but the little noise about it suggests that it will not be pushed. I look for more violence, and more mass protests, an increasingly revolutionary situation impossible to stem because of the successful people's front, which will scare Batista into calling as ineffective a Constituent Assembly as the State Department in Washington can devise. But it will be effective, for it will cement the people's front and teach it how to fight.

Orlando, Fla. CRISTOBAL DAVIS.

Novels and the Class Struggle

TO THE NEW MASSES:

FIRST I want to congratulate us all on Robert Forsythe's return. He may or may not make his victims howl, but he's as good as a tonic to his fellow-travelers.

Then I'd like to put in a belated word with Mr. Hicks and other left-wing critics. It seems to me they have been too exacting and precise as to wh[at] must be included in left-wing fiction. I should that any story material, skillfully presen[ted] class-struggle basis, would make a goo[d] novel.

Mr. Hicks is still too ascetic when, in t[he] controversy, he mentions Grace Lumpkin an[d] [Mi]ng Blue" with apologetic reservations, as co[n]with the literary integrity of Dos Passos. [There] may be slight faults in *To Make My Bread*—I don't see them—but I think Grace Lumpkin has achieved *a classic in this picture of simple admirable people,* awakening to injustice and struggling for their rights. There are oversweetnesses in *A Stone Came Rolling,* but also a good story, fascinating, well contrasted characters, and a luminous charm of presentation throughout. These two writers, I think, have done very well at assimilating the "good news" Mr. Hicks proclaims so warmly—and winningly. I don't like to see apologies for them—especially not to Mr. Dos Passos, whose novels I have never been able to read. I found his articles more readable; but as to fiction, to my mind there was always something unvital and predetermined in his cult of ugliness. He could never mention a tomato unless it were a rotting tomato. He could never see "green" unless it were a "venomous green." At least, that's the impression he left with me. And it's my conviction that the inclusion of beauty, as an essential truth in life and art—beauty of sight and feeling—made *All Quiet on the Western Front* the most powerful of the war novels.

In her *Memories of Lenin,* Krupskaya tells about a certain worker in a boot factory:

> "We are fined for everything," he said. "Shove a heel on a bit to one side, and bang goes another fine!" Vladimir Ilyich said, laughingly: "Well, if you put a heel on all askew, you deserved to be fined."

A writer must work for skill and effectiveness first of all. So long as it be presented with insight, the extent of the message he embodies in a novel is not a matter for criticism.

Staten Island, N. Y. CATHERINE BLAKE.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Sinclair Lewis's Stink Bomb

THE PRODIGAL PARENTS, *by Sinclair Lewis. Doubleday, Doran & Co.* $2.50.

AMONG the many persons annoyed by Sinclair Lewis, none has a better right to be irritated than the Marxist critic. The Marxist holds that there is a fundamental relationship between content and form. He argues that you cannot say a novel is bad as politics and good as literature, because he believes that the political qualities and the literary qualities are inextricably intermingled. But he insists that the relationship is subtle and only to be stated with a hundred carefully formulated qualifications. And then Sinclair Lewis comes along and illustrates the thesis in its simplest and baldest form.

During the past twenty years Mr. Lewis's political views have varied considerably, sometimes swinging fairly far left and then again fairly far right. If you arrange his books in order of their political astuteness, counting from left to right, they fall in some such order as this: *Babbitt, Main Street, Arrowsmith, It Can't Happen Here, Dodsworth, Elmer Gantry, Ann Vickers,* and *Work of Art.* Now judge the books by other standards—the convincingness of the characters, the verisimilitude of the situations, the vigor and veracity of the dialogue, the distinction of the writing, the little touches of insight—arrange them in order of merit, and see how they fall into very nearly the same pattern.

This is a distressing situation. Here we are, demanding more subtlety in evaluation, insisting that political correctness must not be regarded as synonymous with literary virtue, and here is Mr. Lewis, engaged in exhibiting a very unsubtle parallel. And to add to our dismay, his latest novel, *The Prodigal Parents,* which is by all odds the most reactionary, turns out to be by every standard the worst.

The Prodigal Parents is the story of Frederick William Cornplow, who owns an automobile agency in Sachem Falls, N. Y. Fredk Wm, as Mr. Lewis humorously calls him, and Hazel have two children, and they are a trial! The older, Sara, a Vassar graduate, is snobbish, bossy, and grabbing. (She was christened Sarah, but, as Mr. Lewis—the same Mr. Lewis who was recently castigating authors for their careless misuse of words—puts it, she "decapitated" the name.) The younger, Howard, a student at Truxon, is brainless, spineless, and shiftless. Both Sara and Howard expect their father to support them in luxury and get them out of all their fixes. Howard falls in love with Annabel Staybridge, daughter of Sachem Falls's prime snob, and Mr. Cornplow, who likes Annabel and thinks she is too good for Howard, proceeds to support them after they are married. But he is beginning to feel a little resentful, and he and Hazel run away for a vacation in the Berkshires. They are traced down, however, by the children, and brought back alive. When Mr. Cornplow continues to indicate his resentment, Sara tricks him into an interview with a psychiatrist. Then Frederick and Hazel flee in earnest, to Europe. This is enough for Sara, who gets married and settles down, but Howard goes completely to pieces. Fred comes back, takes his son on a camping trip, and Makes a Man of him.

If the summary suggests that the novel is both trivial and unconvincing, it may prepare you for what is to come. For the truth is that *The Prodigal Parents* is superlatively and fantastically bad. It is cheaper than *Mantrap,* duller than *The Man Who Knew Coolidge,* more amateurish than *The Trail of the Hawk.* Its badness is grotesque, embarrassing, and not quite credible.

The characterization is thin to the point of invisibility. The reader learns that Howard looks like "a Norse god" and has one silly idea after another, that Sara has a sharp tongue, that Annabel is pretty sweet, and that Hazel, despite her "slavery to possessions," is a fine pal to Fredk Wm. Mr. Cornplow himself would be considerably more substantial than the other characters except that every time he exhibits what might be regarded as an individual trait, the reader gets him all mixed up with George F. Babbitt or Myron Weagle or Sam Dodsworth. There are, indeed, whole scenes that stir up recollections of earlier books in the way that bad parodies evoke and at the same time destroy pleasant memories. And the dialogue might have been written by someone with a rather bad ear who had listened inattentively to a slovenly reading of *Arrowsmith* or *Babbitt.*

But the worst is yet to be told. The Cornplow children, at the outset of the novel, have fallen under the influence of a Communist named Eugene Silga. Now Sara and Howard are so completely unreal that one cannot say what they would or would not do. Perhaps the only thing one can state with any confidence they would not do is go through the process of reform that Mr. Lewis assigns to them. But next to that in degree of improbability is their displaying the slightest interest in Communism. Each little scrap of insight into their characters that we gather argues against such a development. The neurotic Sara might just possibly fall in love with Silga and hence accept his political views, but Howard—no, if Mr. Lewis is worrying about the radicalism of the Howard of this generation, he is wasting his time.

This is so obvious, and Mr. Lewis is so uninterested in concealing it, that we can only conclude that Eugene Silga was introduced quite simply to serve the author's purposes.

Silga, "a radical agitator," is "slim and taut." He steals and he lies. He calls his young converts "cursed sons of aristocrats," and he has a habit of humming the *Internationale* in emergencies. He talks about "a real honest-to-God dictatorship of the rednecks like me." And he has "a reckless smile."

Now perhaps a certain amount can be forgiven Lewis, the anti-Communist agitator. Silga, he says, "wanted power and revenge; he was willing to risk death in the hope of smashing the entire democratic system and winding up with the factory workers dictatorially running the country and himself running the workers. . . . He was neat and quiet-voiced; he smiled affectionately; and he was, to the world of Fred Cornplow—to the world of Franklin and Emerson and Mark Twain, of Willa Cather and William Allen White—as dangerous as a rattlesnake." A crusader who has taken on, practically single handed, the job of saving the world of Franklin, William Allen White, *et al.,* ought to be permitted an epithet or two.

But it is impossible to forgive Lewis the novelist for the creation of Eugene Silga. After all, Mr. Lewis rode 7382 miles in smoking cars, consuming 346 cartons of cigarettes and unknown gallons of highballs, in order to learn how realtors talk. He can't in a medical expert to help him with *Arro*

Recently Recommended Books

Two Wars and More to Come, by Herbert L. Matthews. Carrick & Evans. $2.50.

Contemporary Mexican Artists, by Augustin Velasquez Chavez. Covici-Friede. $2.75.

Marc Anthony, by Jack Lindsay. Dutton. $3.75.

Letters from Iceland, by W. H. Auden and Louis MacNeice. Random. $3.

Old Hell, by Emmett Gowen. Modern Age. Cloth, 85c. Paper, 25c.

Madame Curie, by Eve Curie. Translated by Vincent Sheean. Doubleday, Doran. $3.50.

Six Centuries of Fine Prints, by Carl Zigrosser. Covici-Friede. $5.

Young Henry of Navarre, by Heinrich Mann. Knopf. $3.

The Pretender, by Lion Feuchtwanger. Viking. $2.50.

The Flivver King, by Upton Sinclair. United Automobile Workers of America. Also by the author, Pasadena, Cal. 25c.

Ralph Fox: A Writer in Arms, edited by John Lehmann, T. A. Jackson, and C. Day Lewis. International. $1.75.

Labor Agitator, The Story of Albert Parsons, by Alan Calmer. International. 35c.

The Civil War in the United States, by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. International. $2.50.

Engels on Capital, translated and edited by Leonard E. Mins. International. $1.25.

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smith. He appeared in pulpits while gathering material for *Elmer Gantry.* He prepared for *Work of Art* by making a minute study of the hotel business. He married Dorothy Thompson before writing *Ann Vickers.* He might have talked for half an hour with a Communist organizer before he put Eugene Silga on paper.

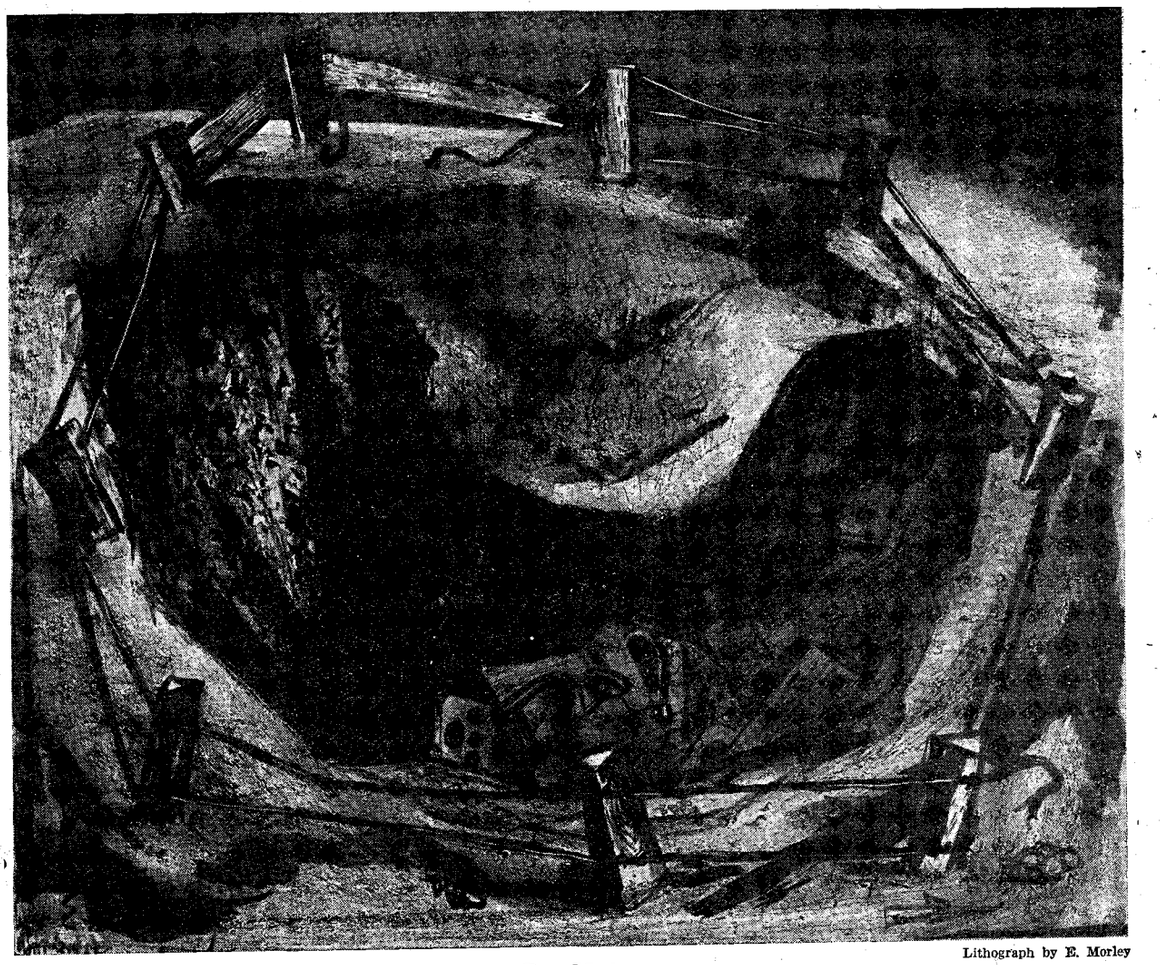
Mr. Lewis once had a reputation for accuracy. Silga is a Communist Party organizer. He goes to Sachem Falls, an industrial town, and his only activity is to form something called the International Workers' Cohesion, the membership of which is drawn mostly from college students. There is no mention whatsoever of there being a unit of the Communist Party in Sachem Falls or of his trying to build one. His chief function, aside from lying and stealing and insulting the Cornplows and Staybridges, is publishing a magazine called "Protest & Progress." (One gathers that the major concern of the Communist Party is the founding of such magazines in all communities of upstate New York.) And in the magazine Silga, who, it is carefully specified, is acting under orders from Communist Party headquarters in New York City, publishes an article calling on the workers of the Pragg Glassworks "to buy rifles, to form classes in marksmanship, to study Georges Sorel," in order to organize the plant.

The stupidity of this piece of Red-baiting surpasses anything said or written by Hamilton Fish and has, indeed, been equalled in this country only by Colonel Frey and Harold Lord Varney. Moreover, since it is made clear that Silga had previously been involved in a strike and that he subsequently was active in the automobile strikes in Detroit, we perceive that Lewis, like Frey and Varney, is as anxious to malign the entire labor movement as he is to attack the Communist Party. (And rightly, for if the world of Sinclair Lewis is threatened by the Communists, it is threatened by the entire labor movement.) Nor does his service to reaction stop there. In the spring of 1936 Silga is trying to collect money for Spain, "where, everyone said, there would be a dangerous fight revolution before long." This, I take it, is Mr. Lewis's pleasant way of lending support to Franco's thesis that the rebellion was started to defend the Spanish people from a horrible Red plot. Then there are some juicy—but not very original—bits about W.P.A. loafers.

Neither the venom of Mr. Lewis's anti-communism nor the confusion of his political thinking can surprise anyone who has been reading his contributions to *News-Week.* Mr. Lewis opened his series of book-notes with an attack on Communist writers. "A surprising number of new talents," he wrote, "plod up the same dreary Communist lane, and produce, all of them, the following novel: There is a perfectly nasty community—mining or pants-making or sharecropping—but in it one Sir Galahad who, after a snifter of Karl Marx, rushes out, gathers the local toilers into an organization of rather vague purposes, and after that everything will be lovely, nobody will ever have hay fever again nor the deacon ever wink at the widow." Mr. Lewis, whose familiarity with Communist novels is probably only slightly greater than his acquaintance with Communist organizers, has continued with a nasty crack in every second or third issue. In between somewhat belated assaults on Dale Carnegie and Gertrude Stein and somewhat ponderous advice on what the young should read, he has made his catty little jibes. And once, in what purported to be a review of *The Writer in a Changing World,* he printed a long list of Trotskyite books—furnished, no doubt, by one of Miss Thompson's research assistants. Indeed, Mr. Lewis cannot say that Americans are "friends, kind, shy, and loyal," or that "Willa Cather has greatly pictured the great life," without a reference to Moscow.

So we knew what to expect on the political level, but, as I have suggested, we could scarcely have anticipated that this peculiar frenzy of anti-Red hysteria—I am afraid Mr. Lewis's psychiatrist did not do a very good job—could have undermined so promptly a literary talent as considerable as I, at least, believe Lewis's to have been. Silga is, I suppose, the key character. Lewis had to have a Communist villain. But I take it that even he knew that he could not, with his preposterous ignorance of Communists and Communism, write a whole novel about Silga. Therefore he hastily threw together a little fable about middle-class Americans and their children, something that he thought would be comforting to his readers, and let it go at that. Or perhaps the Cornplows were in his mind first, and he really intended to do something with them, but became so distraught in thinking about the Red menace that he had to abandon the attempt. Or possibly *The Prodigal Parents* started out to be nothing but a pot-boiler, and Mr. Lewis's determination to be a really solid citizen like Dorothy Thompson got in the way.

Whatever the explanation, the novel is so bad that one can only hope it is never translated into Swedish to embarrass the gentlemen who award the Nobel prizes. In fact, I am all



Lithograph by E. Morley

Pot Hole

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for forgetting it as quickly as possible. When *It Can't Happen Here* was published, I said that, displaying a new kind of awareness, it might mark the beginning of a new and more significant phase in Lewis's career. I would normally say about *The Prodigal Parents* that, exhibiting a singular asininity, it might mark the beginning of a descent to the level of the *American Mercury*. And, by gosh, I will say precisely that—hoping that Mr. Lewis will again prove me a bad prophet.

Of all his contributions to *News-Week*, the saddest was his review of *To Have and Have Not*. The peroration began: "Please, Ernest! You could have been the greatest novelist in America, if you could have come to know just one man who wasn't restricted to boozing and womanizing." (This means, of course, that Hemingway has known only dirty foreigners, for Americans are kind, shy, and loyal.) "Perhaps you still can be," Mr. Lewis continued. "Please quit saving Spain and start saving Ernest Hemingway." Mr. Lewis hasn't wasted any of his time saving Spain, but the salvation of Sinclair Lewis seems pretty remote. If he discovered precisely why Spain —and all it represents—is worth saving, there might be hope for him yet.

GRANVILLE HICKS.

China's Communists in Action

RED STAR OVER CHINA, *by Edgar Snow. Random House.* $3. (*Book Union Selection for January.*)

IT is a double pleasure to report on this book: first, because it seems to confirm what was said in *The Chinese Soviets*, the present reviewer's attempt, made in 1933, to describe the birth and growth of this vital factor in Chinese history; and secondly, because it is written by a man who only three years ago entertained the possibility that the movement "may be emerging rather belatedly, for with the success of the sixth anti-Red drive of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek the greater part of 'Soviet China' appears to have been shattered." Obviously, it was not "shattered" to the extent then claimed by the anti-Communist press, for after having visited the area under the Soviet regime, Mr. Snow reports that "in 1937 the Reds occupied a bigger single unified territory than ever before." After spending four months with the Chinese Communists and interviewing them at length under amazingly favorable circumstances, Mr. Snow has written an account which emphasizes their strength and unity. *Red Star over China* is, with one important exception to be noted later, as complete and reliable a picture of the Soviet regime in China as one could expect from such a capable observer as Mr. Snow.

It is not his personal adventure (interesting in itself) that makes the reading so absorbing, but the wealth of material on a social movement the very existence of which

D. Foster

was for a long time denied by most of the "experts" on China. The value of this material can be judged by the fact that most of it was supplied by Mao Tse-tung, the head of the Soviet regime, and some of it was checked by personal observations of the author right on the spot.

Edgar Snow set out to learn about these warriors who had fought so long, so courageously, and as admitted privately by Chiang Kai-shek's own followers, so invincibly. What was the revolutionary basis of their movement? What were the aims that had made of them the incredibly stubborn warriors (incredible compared with the history of compromise that is China), who had endured blockades, famines, epidemics, and hundreds of battles? How account for the historic Long March of six thousand miles from Kiangsi, in which they crossed twelve provinces of China, broke through thousands of Kuomintang troops, and triumphantly emerged at last into a powerful new base in the Northwest?

The section of the book called "Genesis of a Communist" is the story of Mao Tse-tung, as related by himself. It is a record of how Communism grew in China, "no mere orphan adopted from abroad," in Mr. Snow's words, but "a variety of it real and indigenous to China." We learn about the growth of the Red Army (now the Eighth Route Army), its heroic resistance to Nanking's efforts to crush it, and the titanic Long March. To the revealing story of the leader Mr. Snow adds his personal observation that, after visiting the front and studying the Red Army men, he became convinced of "the youth, the spirit, the training, the discipline, the excellent equipment (most of it acquired from governmental troops), and especially the high political morale. . . ."

After his stay among the Communists, the author knew only too well that they were no "bandits," but a disciplined group of people with high principles and an ardent desire to see China emancipated from the imperialist yoke, and first of all from the Japanese invaders. He had found a society governed by men of extraordinary intelligence and ability, leaders like Mao Tse-tung, the chairman; Chu Teh, commander of the troops, who became a legendary hero for most of the Chinese, far beyond the Soviet areas; Chou En-lai, who negotiated the release of Chiang Kai-shek after the Sian incident; and many others. He had found a government modeled on that of the Soviet Union, but "contrary to the ideas of many people obsessed with the Comintern bogey" completely independent of Russia. "The influence of Russia," he writes, "has probably been more spiritual and ideological than through direct participation in the development. . . ."

Soon after Edgar Snow left "Red China" and returned to Peiping, he found a sharpening tension between the Tungpei-Manchurian troops of young Marshal Chang Hsueh-liang and Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. The Tungpei troops were gradually being transformed from mercenaries into an army inspired by the national-revolutionary, anti-Japanese slogans of the Reds. They became convinced of the futility of continued civil war; they were stirred by one hope—"fighting back to the old homeland," by recovering Manchuria from the Japanese. This change of spirit developed, eventually, into the Sian incident, when Chiang was kidnaped and then released, with the understanding that he was willing to cease the civil war and follow the advice to resist Japan jointly with the Red Army.

> In return for these concessions, the Soviets were ready to adopt the name of "Special Area Government," and the Red Army had petitioned to be included in the national defense forces as a "National Revolutionary Army." . . . These phenomena reflected a general disposition on the part of the Reds to make necessary changes in form and nomenclature, while retaining the essential content of their doctrine and program, and their autonomous existence.

The achievement of the united front in China has paved the way for the emancipation not only of China but of oppressed peoples everywhere.

> The victory of the Chinese liberation movement [as Mao Tse-tung told Mr. Snow] will be part of the victory of world communism, because to defeat imperialism in China means the destruction of one of its most powerful bases. If China wins its independence, the world revolution will progress very rapidly. If our country is subjugated by the enemy, we shall lose everything. *For a people deprived of its national freedom, the revolutionary task is not immediate socialism, but the struggle for independence. We cannot even discuss communism if we are robbed of a country in which to practice it.*

And Mr. Snow is himself convinced of the correctness of what Lenin wrote over twenty years ago, that no imperialist force can erase from the earth the heroic democracy of the popular masses in the Asiatic and semi-Asiatic countries. Mr. Snow concludes his final chapter on "Red Horizons" with the prediction that neither "the democratic socialist ideas for which tens of thousands of youths have already died in China, nor the energies behind them" can be destroyed. "The movement for social revolution in China . . . will eventually win, simply because [as this book proves, if it proves anything] the basic conditions which have given it birth carry within

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themselves the dynamic necessity for its triumph."

It is extremely regrettable that the author, who in general makes a scrupulous effort to get at the facts, repeats the Trotskyite slander that the Communist International is an incidental "bureau" of the Soviet Union. Although he exposes the long and vicious history of the suicidal tactics advocated for China by the Trotskyites, he advances the utterly false view which we are accustomed to hear only from the professional enemies of the Chinese people. He offers not a shred of proof for his statements in the few pages dealing with the subject. It is amazing to find the same writer who checked and rechecked his evidence about the Chinese Soviets, who consulted with Mao Tse-tung to discover the facts which had been obscured or falsified by so many previous writers, picking up a vicious rumor and echoing it without taking the trouble to examine its truth. Mr. Snow's cavalier treatment of the Communist International is in direct contradiction to the testimony of the Chinese Communists. His distortion in this respect is a grievous error, marring a work which is on the whole so informative, accurate, and penetrating.

VICTOR A. YAKHONTOFF.

Golden Dynasties

AMERICA'S SIXTY FAMILIES, *by Ferdinand Lundberg. Vanguard Press.* $3.75.

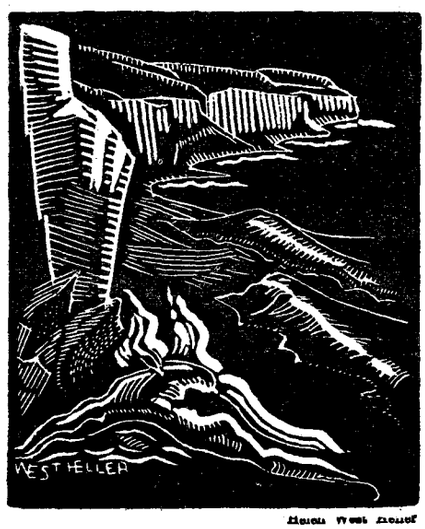
IN the brief period since its publication this new book by Ferdinand Lundberg has enjoyed some unusual distinctions. It has been the text for a radio address by the Secretary of the Interior and for a widely headlined speech by Mr. Robert Jackson, the assistant attorney-general. It is now reported that the attorneys for the E. I. duPont Co. have instituted action for libel against the author. The publishers are making capital of the first two items by large advertising spreads in the metropolitan press. Much less than this was required to make the liberal reader interested in the book. The wide audience which it will receive, thanks to the build-up, warrants an even more careful scrutiny of Mr. Lundberg's work by those progressive groups which seek further knowledge of the workings of our economic system.

Prior to the appearance of these pieces of advertising for the book there appeared several reviews wherein even the reactionary journals treated the book with respect. Indeed, their method was to kill it with kindness, to wrap it in a fog of mixed warm praise and occasional cool queries. The new technique of attack since the politicians quoted it is best seen at work in an editorial in the New York *Times* of Sunday, January 2, entitled "The New Mythology." The method employed by the editorial writer is to parade the existence of three to five million employers from whom those in search of a job may expect help. In this way they discredit Mr. Jackson's contention that there is nowhere for a job-hunter to go except to a "few great corporations dominated by America's sixty families." This is Mr. Jackson's statement and not Mr. Lundberg's.

As a former Wall Street reporter for the *Herald Tribune,* 1927-1934, Mr. Lundberg would not make the mistake of pretending that the businesses controlled by the sixty families gave all the jobs available, nor that there were less than five million security holders (after all duplications had been eliminated). Yet it must be admitted that Mr. Lundberg has contributed something to his own discomfiture. It is obvious from the hullabaloo that *America's Sixty Families* is a good war-cry. It is equally obvious that the preservation of the position of control held by the sixty families requires the allegiance of a great many more families who, rightly or wrongly, associate their interests with those of the sixty families. By giving his book this title Mr. Lundberg has promised both more and less than he is able to fulfill. He has promised more because the book is not a detailed analysis of the roles of the sixty families as such, delving into the separate part played in the economy by the fortune of each family; nor is it better than an impressionistic approach to the question of the identity of interest, real or fancied, between the sixty richest American families and those remaining elements in our society also dedicated to the maintenance of private social property under the guise of private individual property.

These are some of the shortcomings of the book. The reader may be interested in seeing a summary of the contents so that he may form his own opinion of the desirability of pursuing the subject of Mr. Lundberg. It should be clear by now that this reviewer thinks it highly worth while for both students and laymen to read the book carefully and critically. The summary follows:

America's Sixty Families contains the following twelve chapters: Chapter 1, "Golden Dynasties and Their Treasures" states the thesis of the book.



The United States is owned and dominated today by a hierarchy of sixty of the richest families, buttressed by no more than ninety families of lesser wealth. Outside this plutocratic circle there are, perhaps, three hundred and fifty other families, less defined in development and in wealth, but accounting for most of the incomes of $100,000 or more per year that do not accrue to members of the inner circle. These families are the living center of the modern industrial oligarchy which dominates the United States, functioning discreetly under a *de jure* democratic form of government behind which a *de facto* government, absolutist and plutocratic in its lineaments, has gradually taken form since the Civil War. This *de facto* government is actually the government of the United States—informal, invisible, shadowy. It is the government of money in a dollar democracy.

The second chapter is concerned with the sixty families as determined on the basis of approximations and estimations derived from the 1924 income tax. When Mr. Lundberg says family he means family group. He shows families as mobilized in phalanxes behind great banking institutions. He explains why the largest fortunes multiply continuously. His third, fourth, and fifth chapters are devoted to politics; first the politics of pecuniary aggrandisement from 1896-1920 and then the politics of finance capital from 1920-1932. In these chapters are gathered all the hitherto revealed scandals of this era and certain revelations unearthed by Mr. Lundberg largely by correlating already existing material. Chapter 6 discusses intrigue and scandal. Chapters 7 and 8 have been widely praised even in the reactionary press for Mr. Lundberg's analysis of what he calls the "press of the plutocracy." and the "journalism of pecuniary inhibition." This might be called What Paper Is Whose.

To this reviewer two of the most interesting chapters are the ninth and tenth, the titles of which explain the content: "Philanthropy or Non-Commercial Investment" and "Education for Profit and Tax Exemption." In Chapter 11, entitled "Dance Macabre: Extravagance Amid Poverty," the psychopathic expenditures of the grossly wealthy are set down. A table of the original cost of the leading steam and Diesel yachts is provided. It is estimated that the existing Rockefeller establishments have a total valuation of between $50,000,000 and $75,000,000, etc. The last chapter is devoted to the "New Deal and After." It closes with a plea for the closing of the wide tax loop-holes in the upper-bracket income categories in the interests of reducing the national debt.

The country must seriously address itself to the task of dealing with the historically unprecedented huge fortunes growing like cancers on American society, without having any illusions about the difficulties of the problem. Merely to toy with the fortunes of the wealthy, in which their entire psychologies are bound up from birth to death, is very much like toying with a high-tension electric wire.

From this summary it should be plain that Mr. Lundberg has done a much-needed job of bringing together within the covers of one book the material for the indictment of American plutocracy, material which has been accumulating for so many decades. There are

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certain shortcomings not previously mentioned, which deserve attention. In the first place it is quite inadequately supplied with charts and diagrams so that the reader is left with a trackless maze through which he will have to make his way several times before he can make full use of the material for any purpose except entertainment. Mr. Lundberg's treatment of the leading families is inadequate to the complexities of the set-up. Furthermore, the lack of diagrams deprives the reader of any comprehension of the relationship between families and corporations by way of banks and other control institutions.

Mr. Lundberg is surprisingly naïve in his treatment of the security affiliates in such phrases as "irreparable injury to the public interest was done for two decades by these affiliates which sprang up like locusts around nearly all large commercial banks," overlooking the fact they were the formal recognition of a *de facto* relation which inevitably existed; it is naïve to treat this as merely another in the long series of frauds put over on the public.

The material as presented leaves the reader with the impression that Mr. Lundberg has lumped the sixty families into one great mass and then proceeded to single out only half a dozen of the leaders for special consideration. For the students of American economic life interested in detailed understanding of the methods employed by those in control of our society this book will have a limited use. For the general reader it should be of the utmost value, and it is especially to be regretted that the Vanguard Press was forced to price it so that only the middle class can afford it.

R. K. LAMB.

Brief Review

1837: THE BIRTH OF CANADIAN DEMOCRACY, *by Stanley Reyerson. Francis White Publishers. Toronto,* CANADA. $1.

This volume commemorates the anniversary of the revolutionary uprising in which Mackenzie and Papineau participated. Written by a descendant of an active fighter in the 1837 struggle, the book serves as a starting point for a Marxian history of Canada. Mr. Reyerson's dialectic analysis of the revolt provides interesting parallels for contemporary events.

In 1837, democracy was regarded with suspicion and contempt by those in power. The press was censored, democratic leaders were imprisoned, and armed organizations of "patriots"—like the British Legion and the Doric Club—were formed. Canada was ruled by a landowning aristocracy, which came into conflict with the rising mercantile class, supported by the peasants and workers. The middle class was not only illegally plundered by the feudal oligarchy at home (known as the Family Compact), but was mulcted by the British government. There was no popular education, no civil religious liberty, no responsible administration of the law. The people suffered from extreme poverty. The revolution marked the transition in Canada from feudalism to capitalism. Through the course of the century Canada has been transformed from a backward semi-feudal colony into a thriving industrial nation.

The publication of this valuable book is a pertinent commentary on the Duplessis government and the Quebec Padlock Act. The events of 1837 were the first drum-beats in a struggle for Canadian democracy which is by no means over.

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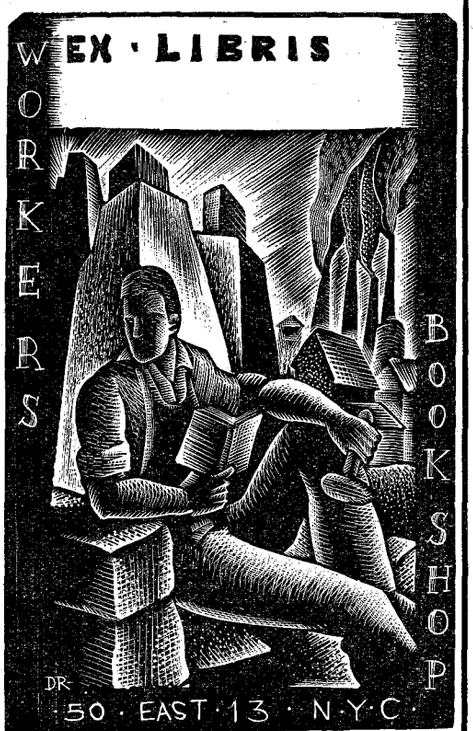

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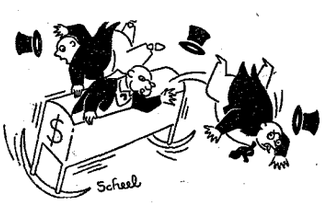

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Fairy Tale in Technicolor

SIX HUNDRED artists, three years of production, multiplane sets, fawns in technicolor, suspense, pathos, laughs, thrills in three dimensions, midgets sent out as press agents, fanfares in the press! Mickey Mouse, it appears, is the father of a superproduction, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs,* a six-reel feature-length treatment of the old folk tale. Only Mickey Mouse isn't in it; perhaps, with his rather rowdy associates, it was felt that the scenery was a bit too expensive for pranks. Nevertheless, as it moved on toward the fifth reel, one began to yawn in mild amusement at this Cecil B. DeMille-ish conception of a fairy tale, and wish Donald Duck would appear from behind somewhere, singing "Hickory Dickory Dock" in that outrageous nasal accent of his. The film is ambitious not only in length but in imagination. Its scope is such that your reviewer found it hard to realize he was viewing, not real dwarfs with real noses of amazing plasticity, but a series of minute and careful drawings. It is a fairy-tale come to life, and it will appear miraculous to millions of children from New York to Siam to Helsingfors to the Cape of Good Hope.

The original folk tale, it may be remembered, does not pretend to be other than savage and moral; the queen, jealous of Snow White, "gave her the poison comb. And it looked so pretty that Snow White took it up and put it into her hair to try it; but the moment it touched her head, she fell down senseless. 'There you may lie,' said the queen, and went her way." There is nothing here of splendid castles, elaborately colored mists, and organ pipes made of totem poles. Disney did not draw his conception from the severe ballad-like form of the original tale; he chose rather to make a series of expensive episodes that resemble the gilded illustrations of a de luxe edition. The colors are luscious, but conventional, and except for a few sections, lack the excitement of creative fantasy.

Walter Disney has had an influence on Hollywood; some of the screwier comedies of the last two years are explicable only on this basis. Yet Hollywood seems in its turn to have affected him also. His heroine, Snow White, sings a torch song at one point; and the melody, leaning as it does toward the "semi-classical," turns the deer, the rabbits, and the bluebirds into lovesick couples, making goo goo at each other. And Disney isn't clowning about it at all, that's the curious part of it. There was a gleam of hope in the attitude of Grumpy (one of the dwarfs) to all that, summed up in his comment: "Mush," but even he relents in the current of all this sweetness, and comes around to be kissed on his tender bald head.

It seems strange that the genius of *Mickey's Moving Day* and of *Pluto and the Orphans,* wherein Pluto's evil and virtuous natures separate and duel for his soul, should find it necessary to stoop for laughs to a stuttering comic named Doc, the type that misjudges the beginnings of words, like a third-rate radio comedian. Dopey, the dwarf who is dumb, is the best of any of the conceptions, but after you've laughed once at his trying to keep step with the others, he repeats this joke fifteen more times, and you remain a trifle bored. Personally, I'll take Donald Duck, remembering his marvelous argument with a watch spring, which scolds back at him in the voice a watch spring should have. The truth is, the humor in *Snow White* is a little too genial, has too much of the trees-in-the-breeze quality, and too little of the wit that has made Disney's work superior to that of other cartoon studios.

For a feature it would have been wiser, and more fun, to have used, say, Lewis Carroll as scenarist. Disney once intended to do a feature on *Through the Looking Glass,* but found certain technical difficulties at the time, and produced a short instead. He should try again on *Alice in Wonderland.* The Queen of Hearts and the Griffin should be there, but who would be more appropriate additions to the tea table where it is always six p. m., than Mickey, Pluto, Donald, and that daffy and apologetic Horse?

The best of Disney is dependent neither on color, nor on celluloid processing, nor gothic subtitles, but on the wit of the idea. It is this wit which conjures a thunder storm out of the *William Tell* overture (in the *Band Concert*) to blow the band, still raging, into the sky. It is this wit which has always governed Disney's previous work, so that every episode flows out of the last by a turn of wit, a visual pun; as when Pluto in Hawaii, longing to be a surf rider, is hurled back by an indignant ocean and buried in the sand and the surf board hurled after him, to become the mock head-stone of his mock grave.

Such things don't happen to Snow White, who gets mourned in a golden-and-glass casket till the prince arrives to wake her with a kiss. The prince is pretty phony. And by that time you're likely to be paying more attention to the little boy in back of you who wants to know, "Mother, what's *that?",* who laughs when the sneezing dwarf sneezes for the twenty-fifth time, and who screams gaily whenever the crockery falls down. Bring the children.

DAVID WOLFF.

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Heart of Spain. A documentary of medical aid to Spain, which has rightly been called "pictorial dynamite."

Plain Fare on Broadway

NO Lucullan fare was served to first night patrons of the Broadway theater last week. Plain, soggy, and frequently unpalatable were the three offerings: *Yr. Obedient Husband, Stop-Over,* and *Tortilla Flat.*

Because John Steinbeck's successful novel, *Tortilla Flat,* is the source of the play which opened at the Henry Miller, it merits first attention; and with it Mr. Steinbeck. *Tortilla*

RECENTLY RECOMMENDED PLAYS

The Shoemaker's Holiday (Mercury, N. Y.). Orson Welles's inspired staging of Dekker's uproarious farce, with its rich, bawdy humor and its gusto for a democratic, warless life. Put this on your "must" list. Alternates with *Julius Caesar.*

The Cradle Will Rock (Windsor, N. Y.). Marc Blitzstein's satiric operetta, a dynamic, pungent work which brings music to grips with reality.

The Good Soldier Schweik (Artef, N. Y.). A robust anti-war satire which provides hilarious entertainment and is enhanced by some of the finest acting to be met with in the theater today.

A Doll's House (Morosco, N. Y.). Ibsen's drama of frustrated womanhood in a charming revival.

Pins and Needles (Labor Stage, N. Y.). This I.L.G.W.U. production is the brightest, most sparkling revue in many a season. Social significance at its entertaining best.

Of Mice and Men (Music Box, N. Y.). John Steinbeck's warm novel of friendship between workers expertly dramatized and extremely well acted.

Julius Caesar (Mercury, N. Y.). Orson Welles's production of the Shakespearean play in modern clothes and with fascist overtones is one of the highlights of the current season.

Golden Boy (Belasco, N. Y.). Clifford Odets's new play of a prizefighter is rich in social implications and still a story that grips for its own sake.

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Flat, in the Jack Kirkland adaptation, is a nasty mess of obscenity, bad acting, and mangled accents. At times it is almost a grotesque, a monstrous distortion of the mild and not at all ignoble mixed peoples of California. Sam Grisman, its producer, has spent good money on it, in the hope that it would, like the other Grisman-Kirkland opus, *Tobacco Road,* become sempiternal. It may. Sensational sex scenes may drag in some paying audiences in these days when Minsky ain't Minsky any more.

I wonder if the fault is not partially Mr. Steinbeck's. His *Tortilla Flat* revealed him to us as a writer of considerable ability, a stylist who viewed the *mestizos* of California with a slightly bemused and cynical air. The Steinbeck native reproductions were darling, precious, and extremely well-written, but—in the view of this critic who has met the real thing—totally unlike the real thing. Mr. Steinbeck's *paisanos* were members of an imaginary tribe, a romantic and picaresque people, drinkers, robbers, lovers, quarrelsome, devoid of will-power, lazy, finding squalor agreeable and the languor of the Monterey sunshine a tonic for all ills. A charming folk and rather dirty-minded.

The Kirkland play is a vulgarization of the novel and must be dismissed with a shrug. But not Mr. Steinbeck. Reviewing *Tortilla Flat* inescapably sends one back over the road of his career, past two milestones, *In Dubious Battle* and *Of Mice and Men.* In *In Dubious Battle* Mr. Steinbeck wrote of the economic oppression which afflicts the migratory workers of California. Despite the fact that he approached the heart of the fierce struggle in which the agricultural workers are engaged, he never came to grips with reality. Again, as in *Tortilla Flat,* he succeeded in distorting, in confusing. These were not the real apple pickers, nor the real organizers, nor, for that matter, was his vague "Party" the real Communist Party. Despite Mr. Steinbeck's sympathy for the downtrodden and his convincing picture of the terror which lurks along the by-paths and in the fields of gloriously beautiful California, he never permitted his readers to know the workers, in their simplicity, their unselfishness, and their devotion to ideals.

Of Mice and Men gave us a deeper insight into the Steinbeck problem. Here he chose as his basis the migratory workers' desire for a roof against the winter rains. This is a theme well worthy of Steinbeck, the literary artist. What pathos and what tragedy is to be found in the roaming families of the Southwest! Here are nomads of our most modern civilization, men, women, and children uprooted, tossed hither and thither by economic forces which extract from them labor and give them in return not even a door to close upon the world at night.

But Steinbeck preferred not to record the broad social picture. He focussed his readers' attention upon migratory workers who were charming enough, to be sure; but oafish, singularly devoid of intelligence, figurettes rather than human beings. Of fraternalism, these Steinbeck workers have their share, but only as a personal, and at bottom, a selfish love. Of social instinct almost none.

In truth, the field workers of California, Mexican and American, migratory and stationary, are like workers everywhere. They have their human weaknesses and also their human virtues. If Mr. Steinbeck should ever clamber down from his Carmelite tower to shake the soil-stained hands of his Dannys and his Macs and his Lennys, he will find them engaged in a mighty war to free themselves from the remnants of feudalism, a dignified, earnest people—and pretty good literary material at that.

Most entertaining of the three plays is *Stop-Over,* which, hash that it is, is preferable to *tortillas* and beans. The brothers Taylor, Matt and Sam, have taken a slice of *Seven Keys to Baldpate,* a dash of Ophelia's mad scene, a *soupçon* of *Outward Bound,* and a kitchen bouquet of May Vokes in *The Bat.* They have tossed these ingredients into a frying pan and have added a few new touches of their own.

They would have you believe that a dipsomaniacal romantic actor, seeking solitude and a rest cure in his ancestral mansion up the Hudson Valley, is beset on All-Hallow's Eve by sundry visitors. The formula includes the well-known wife married to the wrong husband, young couple sharing same couch for the first time, crook with gun, his half-mad wife, actor's old flame and—for a change—a young priest who wants to be a playwright. Well, you can't go very far wrong with that sort of thing. It produces a mild but not unentertaining evening at the Lyceum Theatre.

Stop-Over tries to be meaningful by hinting that all these assorted characters, held at the point of a gun in the actor's home, are really wandering souls, freed from purgatory for the evening. The idea is perfectly dreadful. Please don't think about it at all.

Frederic March and his capable wife, Florence Eldridge, spent plenty of hard-earned cinema cash on a brief Broadway appearance last week in a show called *Yr. Obedient Husband.*

A. Ajay

Mr. March surrrounded himself with some well-known English players, he donned a romantic looking costume, and he got himself the prettiest pair of curtains you ever did see on a stage—and plenty costly, too. Then he and the Missus pretended to be the Steeles, husband and wife. They were not very good pretenders and the play of Mr. Horace Jackson's manufacture was not a very good play, chiefly because Mr. Jackson's idea of what high comedy ought to be is pretty low.

I'd really like to see Mr. March in the role of a romantic young C.I.O. organizer, dashing off to the picket line on a pure white steed; I never want to see him again as the rummy, pre-Casanovian rake and loving spouse withal of *Yr. Obedient Husband.* Nor does anyone else evidently; for the play closed after a run of five performances.

CHARLES E. DEXTER.

Contemporary Chinese Graphic Art

"THE spirit of revolution, that new spirit of social consciousness, democracy, and realism that is today transforming China and forging its millions into a modern state, has now found creative expression in the pictorial arts." Thus Jack Chen, in his foreword to the exhibition of contemporary Chinese drawings, woodcuts, and cartoons at the A.C.A. Gallery, N. Y., states a truth urgent not only for China's artists but also for the artists of America and of every country where cultural workers are surging forward with the rising tide of social change. The truth is that art cannot survive when divorced from reality, and that reality lies in the ceaseless ferment of the masses to become masters of their fate. If this means war to resist fascist aggression, then war is the artist's most immediate theme; but whatever his theme—war, industrial strife, human labor and suffering—it must be life, expressed in a spirit and form consonant with the age's critical tempo.

In China this lesson has been learned by bloodshed, by the unrelenting misery of toiling millions. The ancient art of China was indeed built on the backs of workers, a divertissement for the ruling class, an exquisite and fragile craft, emanating odors as delicate as the lotus, an art so evanescent that it would disappear before the harsh wind of reality. How consoling birds, flowers, waterfalls for those who did not have to live with famine, pestilence, and death. But could such an art prove of any value to China, or to the artists themselves when their whole world was changing?

The contemporary work shown in this exhibition (sponsored by the American Artists' Congress and the Artists' International Association) proves that it could not. But, besides this axiomatic truth, it proves something more, also of great moment to artists of the western world, that the artist who will best

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serve his country with his art must find roots in his own soil and climate. China had a tradition of art, a great and ancient tradition which produced in its time works of art of a magnificent universality. By the time the twentieth century had arrived, fraught with capitalism's decay, this tradition had nothing valid to offer the Chinese artist or the Chinese people: it was the lacquered shell of a glorious past.

In revolt from sterility, the more conscious artists of China turned to other models, especially to radical social artists of the West; Occidental culture was grafted on eastern, almost like a flag of rebellion. Meanwhile older Chinese artists kept on painting flowers, birds, trees, waterfalls, in a crepuscular mood; tradition was made to serve the status quo, to immobilize culture or actually to place it on the side of reaction. Thus the vanguard Chinese artist, remembering timeless, deathless beauty in the past, was robbed of his real inheritance; he was forced to forego the strength inherent in his national tradition, to draw sustenance from imported styles. The final phase, as far as the relation of the contemporary Chinese artist to social change is concerned, is that younger and more militant workers have now turned back to their own tradition, not in the spirit of imitation, but with the deep determination to utilize this spiritual power as they would use their country's natural resources for themselves and all the people of China.

Æsthetically, it is absorbing to study these drawings, woodcuts, and cartoons, seeing in them the familiar visage of the old convention, but a face transformed by the new light of hope. The tradition was—shall we say—static, based on the resignation of a people to economic and social slavery. The new spirit is, as Mr. Chen points out, revolutionary, predicated on the belief that China must and will change into a modern land devoted to democracy and progress. This is a world of change, of movement, of improvement. And the art mirroring it will reflect these qualities, a fact summed up in the word "dynamic." The new art is indeed that, instinct with the tension of the energies of change, using the old characteristics and virtues, the stoicism, the courage, the uncomplaining industry—but for new objectives; not to support war-lords and princes, but to create a decent life for every one.

It is not strange, then, that hope breathes from these pictures. Since the artist need not torture himself either with the rigid pattern of tradition nor with the dark intricacies of the inner life, he is free to move outward toward the real world, in fact to assist in making the real world a better world. It is the noblest aim an artist has had for many a century, and, as said above, an aim not confined to China.

Since the exhibition is a pioneer one, the first of its sort ever to be held in the United States, it is just that the artists participating should be listed for future record. They are: Chang Hui, Lo Ching-chun, Pun Yee, Tuan

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Kan-ching, Yeh Chen-yu, Yeh Fu, Chien Tao, Rachel Levis, Li Hua, Chen Yen-chiao, Lui Lun, Li Chun, Wu Chigio, Hsin Po, Kao Kang, Lo Shao-fei, Chang Kwang-yu, Chang Lo, Lo Ping, Li Wu-chung, Yieh Po, Wang Tse-mei, "W. Z.," Lou Chin-chun, Siao chi, Jack Chen, Wu Ko, Paddy O'Shea (whose father was Irish, but whose mother was Chinese), and others. ELIZABETH NOBLE.

Toscanini and Others at the Microphone

THE Toscanini broadcasts have been the big noise of the last few weeks, but the loudest drums have been those beaten by the press. As a somewhat Missourian admirer of *the* maestro I have been pleasantly surprised to find some of his most devout worshipers examining the broadcasts with a critical dispassion they used to check with their hats at his concert hall performances. And well they may. The absence of his visual presence and the freedom from the grip of crowd hysteria combine to whittle the *Uebermensch* down to human size. For many the series has been a discovery that even an idol may be clay-footed; for others they have reaffirmed the belief that Toscanini is one of the great conductors, but in a strictly limited sphere; a musician unsurpassed for his rhythmical clarity but one often lacking in breadth, humor, and insight. In short, no miracle man.

On his first program (Christmas night) the Vivaldi concerto was superb, but the Mozart G-minor Symphony, for all the thoroughness of detail, lacked the sparkle of spontaneity and the soaring lyricism we so closely associate with the term "Mozartian." The Brahms First was definitely dull, with even the customary muscularity missing. I missed most of the second concert, but even two of the most famous Toscanini war-horses on the third (January 8) failed to excite me. Debussy's *La Mer* was lacking in homogeneity and poetic manipulation of sonorities (although here the studio engineers were largely to blame), and while Toscanini undeniably plays the Beethoven *Pastorale* with uncommon finesse, first-rate musicianship is still not rare enough to be acclaimed as genius.

The next afternoon the radio proffered another fine musician, surely no peer of Toscanini as a conductor, but one who rose astonishingly close to the stratosphere of genius. The first part of Georges Enesco's program with the New York Philharmonic demonstrated his familiar talents as a violinist in the A-minor Bach concerto and Chausson's *Poème.* Hardly a virtuoso fiddler, his straightforward, sensitive playing was a welcome relief from such sorry virtuosity as that exhibited the week before by Elman in the Tchaikovsky concerto. But Enesco surprised even his admirers with a revealing reading of the Beethoven *Eroica,* the most lyrical and singing performance I have ever heard of this symphony. Uncorrupted by any attempt at epic grandeur, it was funda-

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mentally melodic, phrased to perfection, and ravishingly lovely in tone.

The lack of pure beauty of tone in the Toscanini broadcasts has been blamed on the N.B.C. Symphony, but to my mind the fault lies wholly with the type of studio and the transmitting equipment and engineers. No real sonority can possibly be obtained, the sheen of the strings is coarsened, and every fortissimo ensemble passage is powdery dry and harshly strident. I have heard Monteux play the Handel D-minor *Concerto Grosso* in concert; and hearing him play it again on an earlier N.B.C. broadcast, I refused to believe that he had any idea of how it was sounding over the air. And I am sure that Toscanini has as little idea of how his performances—that of *La Mer* in particular—sound to radio listeners. Unless he is equipped with earphones so that he can judge his playing as it is actually picked up by the microphones, instead of as it sounds in the studio itself, the series is doomed to failure. (What should be done is to move the whole affair into a decent auditorium.) As it is now, we must judge the series by its one success: the perfect performance of Saint-Saëns's *Dance Maacabre,* in which the conductor's rhythmic clarity and the hollow tonal quality of dead studio broadcasting were ideally suited to the music at hand. But if the *Danse Macabre* is the best the touted N.B.C. Toscanini concerts can do, they will go down in music history as the most colossal mountain ever to give birth to a mouse.

Hugh Ross and the Schola Cantorum had courage to venture on the first American performance of Delius's Nietzschian *Mass of Life* (Carnegie Hall, N. Y., January 12) and as an old—if somewhat backslidden—Delian I couldn't stay away. There were moments of the former magic: the fugal dance section, the moment before midnight ("Dahin! O Jugend!"), and some of the broad passages for full chorus were both thrilling and deeply moving. But how alien the whole idiom and inspiration sound today. Even its nostalgic appeal was weakened by the incompetence of the soloists and the none too competent orchestral playing. I got more pleasure from the innocent antique shop of the London Intimate Opera Company—Miss Radford, Messrs. Dunn and Woodhouse, and a quintet (Little Theatre, week beginning January 4). The singing and acting is probably run-of-the-mill, but the little *Singspiele* were given with a humor that seldom degenerated into burlesque and at their best were surprisingly attractive entertainment. There was at least one moment of great music, in Dr. Arne's *Thomas and Sally*: one would have to comb the whole operatic repertory for a lovelier duo. But the real lesson one learned was that the old boys like Arne, Dibdin, Carey, and Purcell were supreme craftsmen in setting the English language to music. Except for Sullivan that art was ignored or lost for years until its contemporary revival, as demonstrated in so different an idiom, but with no less skill, by a man like Blitzstein.

I thought for once I could write a column

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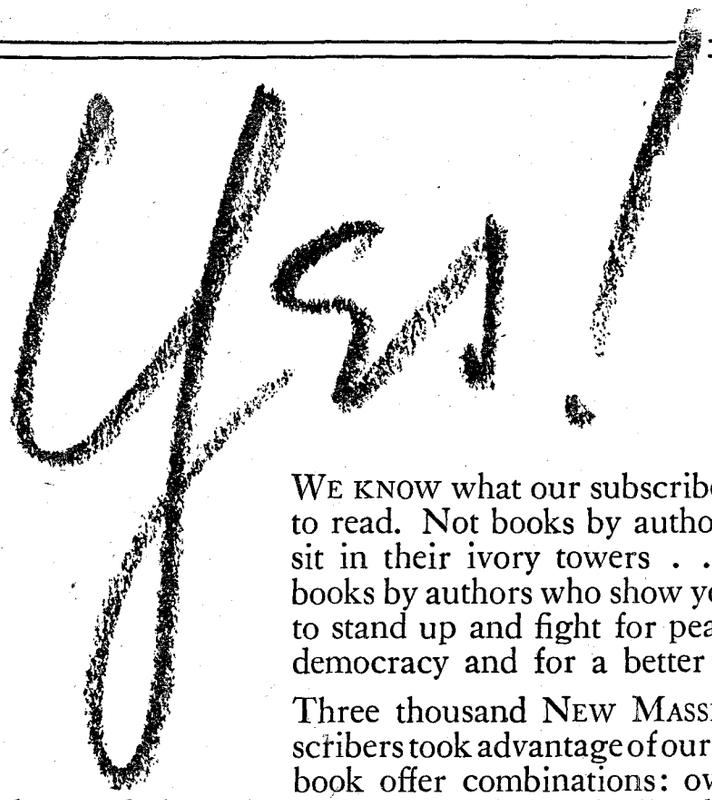

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without reference to that man with the tune, but try to keep out of any discussion of music —of any age—in contemporary life. This time he provides a good opportunity for a reminder that his masterpiece—along with a wealth of other timely achievements in diverse forms—is included in the NEW MASSES own concert at the 46th Street Theatre, February 6, a date emphatically not to be forgotten.

R. D. DARRELL.

Young Choreographers

IN its second concert of the season at the 92nd Street Y.M.H.A. in New York, the American Dance Association again presented younger dancers in a program of compositions predominantly and healthfully devoted to the contemporary scene. Themes ranged from Marie Marchowsky's satiric *A Moral for Workers—Horatio Alger* to Ida Soyer's emotionally stirring *War Face,* and with little exception indicated a mature approach.

In order of their appearance, Suzanne Remos presented a rather well developed composition which was technically pleasing. But *The Young Are Starving But Not for Food,* considering relief rolls are on the up, hit a bit of a sour note. Granted that food is not the only thing for which adolescents are hungry, there's no need for what amounts to a reactionary program note.

Eva Desca took too big a bite in her picture of the South, *Death of a Negro—Southern Style.* The first two sections of the dance, "In the Klavern" and "Under a Lynch Tree" follow well enough and dramatically. But from there, the young dancer leaps into an attack in "Senator from Alabama" which does not flow organically out of the composition, and is anti-climactic coming after an effective lynch scene.

Marie Marchowsky, who is a regular member of the Martha Graham group and has been seen in solo concert before, indicated marked development in her well integrated *A Moral for Workers, Folk Song,* and the satiric *Red-Baiter.* She exhibits marked facility and moves rapidly toward a personal idiom which should find itself in more positive subject matter.

Marjorie Hyder's *Spring Underground* is concerned with the coming of April. The dancer is technically equipped to do work of more contemporary importance.

Evelyn Jackson's *Hunger* is a fairly literal impressionist composition, but the young Negro dancer has quality in movement and a sensitivity. She is definitely an A.D.A. find.

Fanya Chochem is a bit heavy in her treatment of excellent choreographic materials: lynching in *Trial by Fury,* silicosis in *Miner's Legacy.* Her Group work as well as her own dancing has improved, but right now her dances are concerned more with ideas than with people.

Ida Soyer has been seen for some time as

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the leading dancer in the Tamiris group. Last summer, with Tamiris on leave, she took the leading rôle in *How Long Brethren?* This was her first solo appearance. Her composition, concerned primarily with emotional experience in contemporary conflicts, is sensitive and the emotional intensity of her movement carries a maturity of conviction. *The Last Spring* is essentially nostalgic, but the composition is derived from Spain and carries the impact of the knowledge of the bloody fascist invasion. For all its romantic overtones, the dance is a stirring and disturbing commentary.

Perhaps not as well turned, but more dramatically positive is *War Face,* made of the experiences of and dedicated to Robert Raven, who was blinded in action with the Lincoln Brigade. The dance is a moving affirmation. Blind and badly crippled, Raven walks here in the picket lines, addresses meetings, speaks for Spain and China in our courthouses. More or less, he is a personification of Spain fighting its way to victory through the blinding fascist invasion and the crippling double-crossing farce of non-intervention. *War Face* carries more militant conviction and direction than its title implies. Ida Soyer has done a beautiful composition.

The Negro spirituals by Ida Little, Ida Soyer, and Dvo Seron, although liberally derived from Tamiris's spirituals, were well composed and introduced a lively Ida Little and a technically well equipped Dvo Seron, as well as some good composition.

It was a completely gratifying concert. The A.D.A. is doing a good job.

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(Times given are Eastern Standard, but all programs listed are on coast-to-coast hookups)

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The College Curriculum. Faculty and students of Columbia University present their points of view on the place of the humanities in the college curriculum today, Sat., Jan. 22, 2:15 p.m., C.B.S.

Arturo Toscanini. The maestro conducts another in his series of ten concerts, Sat., Jan. 22, 10 p.m., N.B.C. red and blue.

Modern Age Books. Dramatized book reviews of *From Spanish Trenches,* by Marcel Acier; *The Labor Spy Racket,* by Leo Huberman; and *The Honorable Picnic,* by Thomas Raucat, Sat., Jan. 22, 9:30 p.m., C.B.S. (WABC only). The following program includes dramatizations of *Men Who Lead Labor,* by Bruce Minton and John Stuart; *Blood of the Conquerors,* and *Death Slams the Door,* Sat., Jan. 29, 9:30 p.m., WABC.

Science. A new series of broadcasts sponsored by the American Assn. for the Advancement of Science, Wed., Jan. 26, 7:45 p.m., N.B.C. blue.

Town Meeting of the Air. S. K. Ratcliffe and Major Joseph S. Barnes discuss the struggle for power in the Mediterranean, Thurs., Jan. 27, 9:30 p.m., N.B.C. blue.

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GANNES WROTE:

SEPTEMBER 6, 1937

"Both the bulk of news from Washington and confidential reports of private conversations with State Department officials indicate that the United States attitude towards Japanese aggression and for collective peace action is stiffening."

OCTOBER 21, 1937

"Brazil is being groomed for a fascist *coup*....

"Both the Integrellista leader, Plinio Salagado, and dictator Getulio Vargas are fearful to allow the masses to go to the polls on January 3."

NOVEMBER 23, 1937

"All pretense in Tokyo that its aggression in China will be of short duration has been dropped."

THIS HAPPENED:

OCTOBER 5, 1937

President Roosevelt makes his famous Chicago speech against aggression and calling for collective peace action.

NOVEMBER 10, 1937

Vargas sets up Fascist dictatorship in Brazil, and perpetuates himself in office, prohibiting forthcoming elections.

JANUARY 9, 1938

Japanese Cabinet announces plan for 4-year "emergency situation" in war with China.

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